This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

LOEB MUSIC LIBRARY
ML 163H R

MUS
1512
432

Digitized by Google

Mus 1512.432

Naumburg Bequest

THE MUSIC LIBRARY
OF THE
HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

DATE DUE

MAY 1 1 1992

NOV 2 1 1991

JUN 1 5 1992

HIGHSMITH 45-220

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE VIOLIN MUSIC OF BEETHOVEN.

Digitized by Google

PRINTED BY E. SHORE AND CO.,
3, GREEN TERRACE, ROSEBERY AVENUE, LONDON, E.C.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.

Digitized by Google

"THE STRAD" LIBRARY, No. X.

THE

VIOLIN MUSIC

OF

BEETHOVEN,

BY

J. MATTHEWS.

COPYRIGHT.

London:
THE STRAD OFFICE, 3, GREEN TERRACE, ROSEBERY AVENUE, E.C.
E. DONAJOWSKI, 26, CASTLE STREET, BERNERS STREET, W.
D. R. DUNCAN, 186, FLEET STREET, E.C.
New York:
CHARLES SCRIBNERS' SONS, 153—157, FIFTH AVENUE.
1902.

Digitized by Google

Mus 1512.432
✓

Dedicated by permission to

DR. JOSEPH JOACHIM.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

NOV 30 1966

EDA KUHN LOEB MUSIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

A BRIEF explanation only is needed with respect to this reprint of articles which have been appearing in THE STRAD for the past two or three years.

Those compositions of Beethoven in which members of the string family participate as solo instruments only, have been regarded as coming within its scope; to the exclusion of the orchestral works. Moreover, the symphonies have been so ably treated by the late Sir George Grove, that to cover again the same ground would be a work of supererogation.

Young students often suppose that they ought to admire every work which proceeds from a great genius; an attempt therefore has been made to convey some idea of the relative art-value and importance of the various compositions discussed in these pages. For between the best work of any man and his least inspired, there is a wide difference. Certainly nothing annoyed the great master more than to hear his least mature works praised, especially at a time when many of his greatest creations were too little studied to be understood save by a few.

In addition to such historical notes as could be gathered, some assistance in analysing the form and construction of Beethoven's chamber music—a knowledge so necessary for ensuring a correct balance in performance—and also a few hints as to the best editions have been offered.

JOHN MATTHEWS.

Guernsey, October, 1902.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

PAGE

CHAPTER I.

THE SONATAS FOR PIANO AND VIOLIN, NOS. I.—V. 1

CHAPTER II.

THE PIANO AND VIOLIN SONATAS, NOS. VI.—X. 22

CHAPTER III.

THE TRIOS FOR PIANO, VIOLIN AND VIOLONCELLO 45

CHAPTER IV.

THE STRING TRIOS 63

CHAPTER V.

THE QUARTETS 66

CHAPTER VI.

THE PIANO QUARTETS AND THE STRING QUINTETS 87

CHAPTER VII.

THE VIOLIN CONCERTO, ROMANCES, VIOLONCELLO SONATAS AND VARIATIONS 89

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SKETCH BOOKS.. 95

CHAPTER IX.

BEETHOVEN'S STRING QUARTET 100

Digitized by Google

THE

Violin Music of Beethoven.

CHAPTER I.

The Sonatas for Piano and Violin.

THE sonatas for piano and violin of Beethoven will be approached by players—professional as well as amateur—with very different feelings according to individual temperament. If, like Beethoven's greatest interpreter, Joachim, the player is "musician first and violinist after," he will regard them for the intrinsic value of the ideas therein enshrined, as amongst his choicest possessions; if the virtuoso is uppermost, he will surely neglect them for works more brilliant and full sounding; such as abound in strong effects written by great violinists for the display of a special violin technique. When, as in a sonata for the piano and violin, both instruments are placed on an equality, the composer is set face to face with a somewhat difficult task. The violin being essentially a melodic instrument, it appears like a dethroned monarch when made to play ordinary accompanimental figures to the theme given to the piano. The violin may comment upon, ornament, or add some entirely new feature of interest to the musical thought as originally conceived, or, failing these, be silent altogether for a while; either course is preferable to the exact transference of such figures as are best suited to, and mostly associated with, the piano according to one's ideas of the fitness of things. Then, again, it is probably seldom that a theme will occur to the composer in its dual form for the two instruments; it is more likely to

Digitized by Google

occur to him as being suitable for one instrument or the other, and afterwards becomes "adapted" to meet the requirements of a duo in which the parts must be equally important and interesting for both instruments. And when a striking theme has been invented for a "first" movement, upon reaching the development section (with its working out and transposition into other keys not so well suited to the peculiar limitations of the violin as the original presentment) real difficulties are encountered in the production of a work in the highest form of instrumental art;—the "sonata form" common alike to the sonata, quartet, and symphony. For all these reasons it will be seen that the sonata, so far as the violin is concerned, does not spring so spontaneously from the fingerboard and what is most particularly convenient to it, or serves best to display its special effects, as many a virtuoso piece, but must take its stand as absolute music, "musician's music" rather than violinist's, if we may be permitted to make this distinction. Thus it is that violin sonatas which fulfil all conditions are rare.

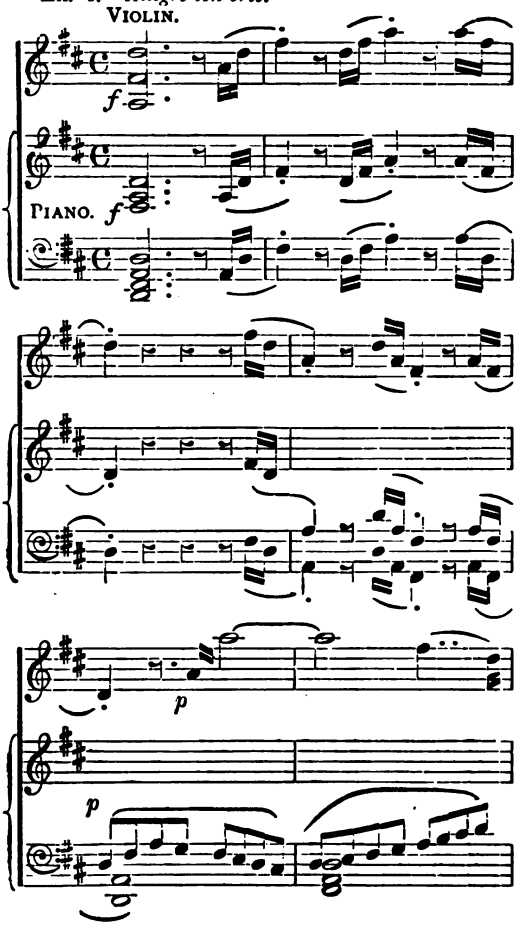
To Beethoven's violin playing there is but little allusion in the biographies, but it is known that in 1785 he was studying the violin with Franz Ries, father of Ferdinand Ries, from whom Louis Ries of "Monday Pop." fame and Franz Ries, the composer of the well-known suites for violin and piano, are directly descended. Beethoven was then fifteen; later in life we are told that he was fond of amusing himself occasionally with the double bass.

The first three sonatas for piano and violin, op. 12, are dedicated to F. A. Salieri, a prolific Viennese composer, whose advice was from time to time asked by Beethoven chiefly with regard to the correct arrangement of Italian words to his vocal music. The first sonata in D contains but few traces of the individuality which was subsequently made manifest in Beethoven's writings; the opening movement, an allegro con brio, might have been written by Mozart, so thoroughly is it in that composer's style, with its conventional runs, used to link the subjects

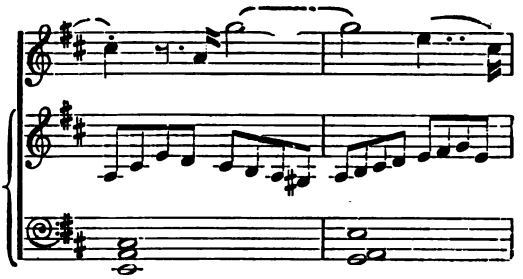
Digitized by Google

together. Four bars of introduction for the two instruments in unison serve to usher in the principal theme:—

Ex. 1. *Allegro con brio.*



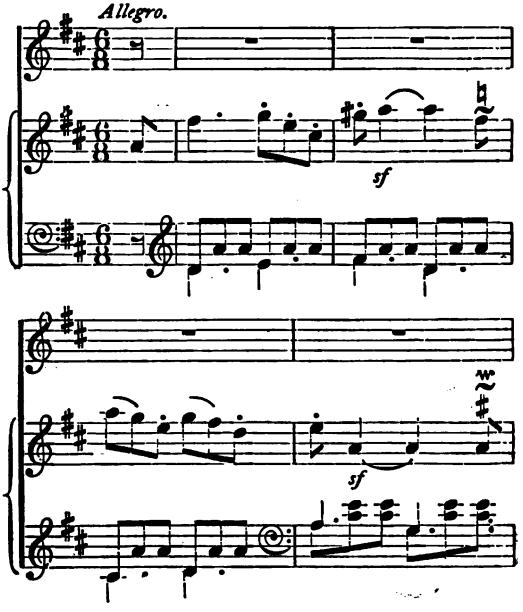
Digitized by Google



The theme in A, and its four variations which follow, are equally Mozartean in manner. The finale is a lively rondo which makes a charming piece detached from the rest.

EX. 2. RONDO.

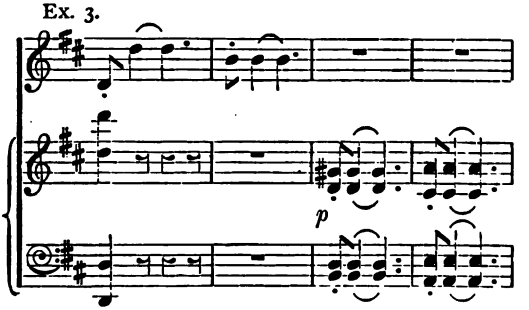
Allegro.



Digitized by Google

Here are no big effects; not a note more than is absolutely necessary do we find. All is Arcadian simplicity; the "welt-schmerz" which has fastened as with a grip of iron on so much modern German and Russian music was then unknown; the naïve was not then considered childish. Yet one transient note of pain intrudes itself upon the merry scene (in the middle of the movement where the second note of the melody is made F natural) and a deeper earnestness pervades the music; a foreshadowing of the things which were to come! Fourteen bars from the end we are treated to one of Beethoven's subtly humorous effects—

Ex. 3.



It is as though, with the sudden break in the rhythm, violinist and pianist had lost themselves, and were cautiously feeling their way in these *pp* passages: six bars from the end they find each other, proceeding with growing confidence to the final rush of semiquavers *ff* in the penultimate bar which announces the end of the work. It is very characteristic of the composer thus to play with the listener by arresting the flow of the music, so that one wonders what is to follow; the parts, either as here, timidly searching for the lost idea, or in other cases, each instrument insisting on its own entry in contradiction to the other. Such touches of humour in classical works are often far too subtle for the comprehension of the average hearer, who listens with a resigned air to works in sonata form, as though a smile would be quite out of

Digitized by Google

place, and show undue levity! Farmyard effects, imitations of tuning up; yes, these he understands, but the refined playfulness of the great masters touches him not; his jests must be duly labelled. Yet it is the privilege of all really great music to traverse the whole range of human emotion, and no previous composer understood this so well as Beethoven.

Technically, this sonata is about the most suitable for students to begin their study of Beethoven with. Smooth legato playing, neatness and delicacy in the staccato passages, are the qualities requisite for the proper rendering of it, rather than power and vigour of style. As a preparation for the Beethoven sonatas generally, it may be said here that nothing better than Kreutzer's celebrated 40 studies will be found, to which might be added those of Fiorillo and Rode for the mastery of the different positions. Kreutzer especially accustoms the player to take some characteristic violin figure through various modulations, and in positions or on degrees of the scale which cause the original idea to become technically more difficult and awkward to render with purity and certainty of intonation. Fiorillo imparts flexibility of bowing, rather than the firmness of grip one acquires from Kreutzer; whilst Rode takes the player over the various positions and in all the keys in such a way that his technique cannot fail to be improved. Some of the Mozart sonatas for piano and violin should be studied before those of Beethoven, for both technical and historical reasons, and to the young student who has learnt some of Mozart's, this first one of Beethoven's will seem but a continuation of the older master rather than a composition in a style entirely new to him.

The second sonata of Op. 12, in A major, quite as much as the first, recalls the days when—

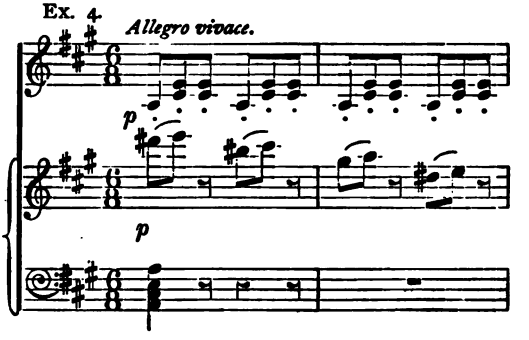
"Music, heavenly maid, was young."

If asked to describe in two words the prevailing mood of the tone-poem now before us, those words would be "simplicity and innocence." Under the storm and stress

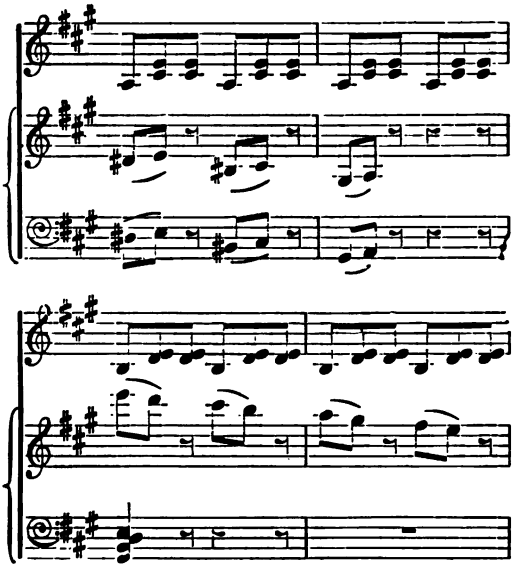
Digitized by Google

of modern art—and, be it noted, it was Beethoven himself who prepared the way, in his later works, for the more passionately emotional utterances of Wagner and Tschaïkowsky—it has become to many of us increasingly difficult to transport ourselves into the right mood for the unalloyed enjoyment of these earlier works. And at times we find ourselves actually tempted to lay sacrilegious hands even upon the productions of great masters of the sonata form. The broader and fuller sounding *effects* (though the *ideas* may not be in themselves so valuable) of modern sonatas make us wish here and there to fill up the thin two-part writing for the piano in these sonatas of Beethoven! When tempted so to do, we should remember that it was very far from the composer's intention to make these earlier works sound big, imposing and orchestral, like the "Waldstein" and "Appassionata" sonatas of a later period, for the piano alone, for example. Daintiness, delicacy and grace are instead stamped upon every page. So strongly does the music reflect these characteristics—that a large tone and brilliant style—so necessary in many other works—seem here positively out of place; the players are invited to wrestle neither with violent emotions nor great difficulties, but both violinist and pianist must be thoroughly in sympathy with each other and with the music, or the result will be *nil*.

Ex. 4.



Digitized by Google



The sonata in A major consists of an Allegro vivace in six-eight time, an Andante, "Più tosto Allegretto" in A minor, two-four time, and an Allegro piacevole, three-four time.

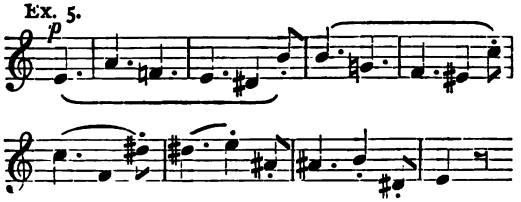
A glance at the above quotation, giving the first subject of the Allegro vivace, shows its interchangeable character with regard to the two instruments. This first movement already reveals to us Beethoven as the bold innovator in formal construction. The second subject, instead of appearing in the usual dominant key, starts on the dominant of F sharp minor—the sub-mediant—but is very modulatory in character. We pass rapidly within the limits of sixteen bars through F sharp minor, G major, E major, F major, and back again to E major. And after the "free fantasia," or development section, we are presented with the first subject in D major—the sub-

Digitized by Google

dominant of the original key. Yet everything appears to come about in the most natural manner, so that nothing unusual is felt. Indeed, it seems as is so frequently the case with Beethoven's experiments in design, as if it could not be otherwise. But, remembering the period at which this work was written, it must have appeared very novel to his most conservative contemporaries. Many of them shook their heads and expressed grave misgivings just as their successors have been doing in our time with regard to Wagner.

Here is a melodious unisional passage from the first movement, which to harmonise fully would be to spoil:—

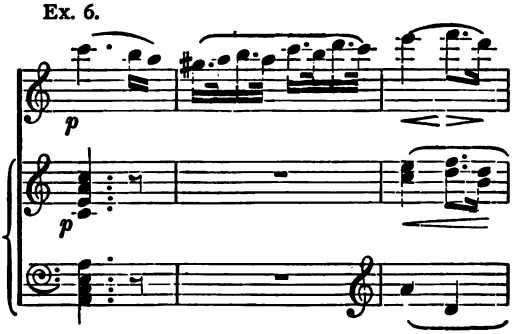
Ex. 5.



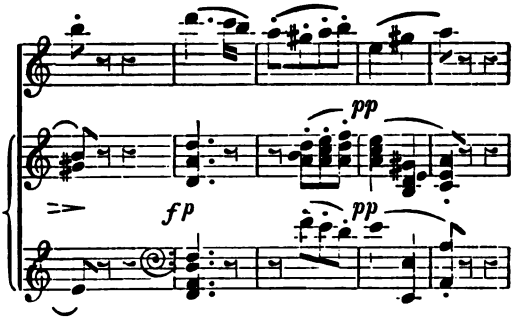
The piano part—both hands in the bass clef—doubles the violin part in octaves; it is therefore unnecessary to give it.

The second movement, the "Andante più tosto Allegretto" in A minor, opens with a plaintive and eminently vocal theme; the first eight bars for the piano being immediately taken up and repeated by the violin as follows:

Ex. 6.

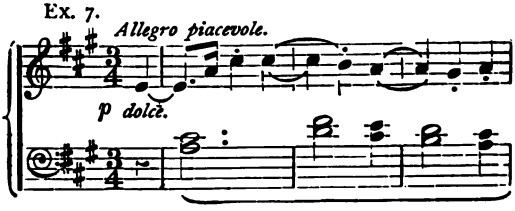


Digitized by Google

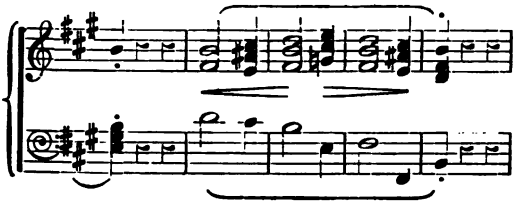


Equally vocal in character is the second subject in F major, with its closely interwoven imitation in the piano part. Beethoven, great pianist though he was, never fell into the error of making the piano part more brilliant and interesting than that for the violin; a perfect balance is always maintained. The movement is full of interesting points over which we would fain linger, showing the admirable use Beethoven makes of his thematic material; the shortening or lengthening out of short phrases from the principal theme in the latter half of the movement, with the occasional addition of some new feature of interest, and the care with which all dynamic signs are indicated, so as to bring each climatic point into the strongest relief, all of which risings and fallings, or fluctuations in the music, we usually, but rather more vaguely and loosely, are content to sum up under the one term "expression," or by borrowing from the sister art, the term "shading." The Allegro piacevole is a rondo of most graceful and captivating character upon this theme started by the pianoforte:—

Ex. 7.

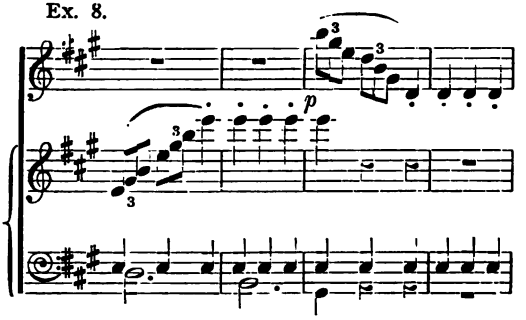


Digitized by Google



A most expressive *cantilena* for the violin is the page of episode in D major, after which a portion of the principal subject matter is played with in its major and minor forms, until we are led back to the original key, though not at once to the principal subject in its entirety. It is worthy of note that the orthodox dominant pedal which prepares us for it is here in a middle part :—

Ex. 8.



This little four-bar section is given *three* times in succession, without any modification. The movement is the reflection of a light-hearted and genial mood, with no premonition of the troubles of Beethoven's after years to darken it.

Digitized by Google

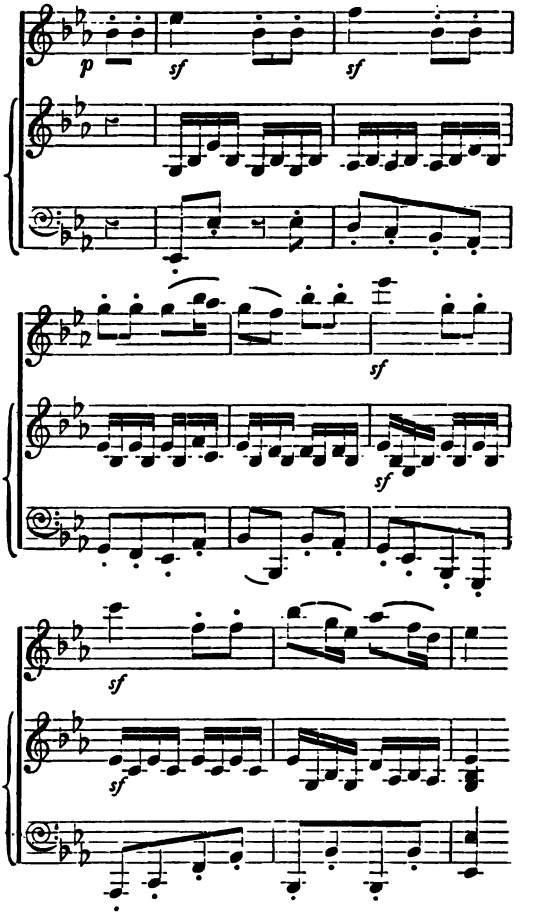
The third sonata of Op. 12 contains an Allegro con spirito in E flat, C time; an Adagio con molt' espression in C major, two-four time, and a Rondo in E flat, two-four, Allegro molto.

The first movement is the least interesting one we have yet had to deal with. Much of the writing therein is of a somewhat conventional and commonplace description, measuring the composer by himself. The Adagio is more deeply felt. In these long drawn out melodies, Beethoven invariably sounded a note of deeper feeling than previous composers. Occasionally, indeed, with cheerful old papa Haydn, we come across a page of music so serious and "intense," that we wonder, as in the case of the fly in amber, how it got there. Let not the student confuse the Beethoven Adagio with the composer's own, or any other composer's Andantes. The true Beethoven Adagio is a profound reverie, very broad and sustained in style, with very slow beats. The frequent after division of the notes into those of the shortest duration, ought to be a sufficient indication of the slow and measured rhythm underlying the whole movement. Where there is no suggestion of change in the time, such passages in demisemiquavers or even shorter notes, however florid, were never meant to convey the idea that a rapid and brilliant *presto* was being played. An Adagio movement thus commenced in the spirit of an Andante will often lead the player into confusion when the more florid portions are reached, in the attempt to maintain a uniform tempo. A much less objectionable fault is the slight quickening of a movement intended to be bright and animated, such as an Allegro bordering on a Presto, provided, of course, the player's technique be fully equal to the occasion. But when a *slow* movement is made to feel like a quick one, or to convey that impression to the listener, the entire spirit of the music is lost, and we are rudely awakened from our dream of measureless content and repose.

The Rondo, as in the two previous sonatas, begins with its first eight-bar section for the piano alone, repeated thus by the violin :—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 9. *Allegro molto.*



Digitized by Google

The Rondo of the A major sonata is idyllic in character. This is more exuberant, and from the beginning to the end its irresistible gaiety is maintained.

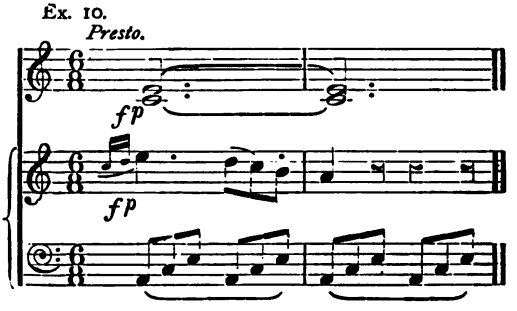
The three sonatas constituting Op. 12 are just exactly a century old; an advertisement in a Viennese paper showing that they were in print in January 1799; probably Beethoven's musical friends had heard them somewhat before that date. They were dedicated to Antonio Salieri, Beethoven's teacher, the Court Capellmeister of the Viennese capital for fifty years. The original title-page was thus inscribed in Italian :—

"*Tre Sonate per il Clavicembalo o Forte-Piano con un Violino composte, e dedicate al Sigr. Antonio Salieri, primo Maestro di Capella della Corte Imperiale di Vienna, etc., etc., dal Sigr. Liugi van Beethoven Opera 12. A Vienna presso Artaria e Comp.*

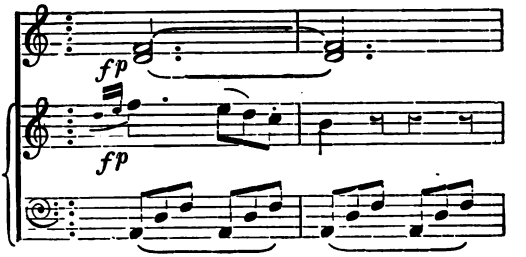
The fourth sonata, Op. 23, in A minor, contains the following movements:—Presto, six-eight time, A minor; Andante scherzoso, piu allegretto, two-four time, A major; Allegro molto, common time, A minor.

The first movement opens with this subject:—

Ex. 10.



Digitized by Google



Our modern tarantellas are anticipated in this presto. It is also noticeable for the unusual feature of two repeated sections, the mad pace proper to the movement making this possible with good effect. Beethoven has studiously refrained from the use of full-sounding chords for the sake of effect; the part-writing is clear and distinct as in a piece of Bach's, and in this light it must be viewed, and not from the standpoint of the modern sonata. The rhythmic variety so characteristic of Beethoven in the majority of his works finds here no place, but the "Tarantella" rhythm and feeling is maintained to the end.

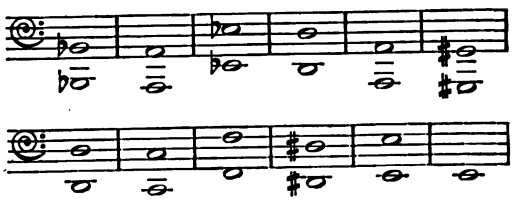
The "Andante scherzoso, piu allegretto" is in the form of a first movement, with second subject in the dominant key of E major, full close in that key, repeat, and short development section. The principal theme on its reappearance is decorated with shakes, etc., and the whole movement shows us Beethoven in his most playful mood, light-hearted, and as full of an innocent gaiety as his predecessor, Haydn.

The Allegro molto is virtually a rondo with episodes in the keys of A and F major. The first episode is singularly brief, occupying two lines only; the theme of the F major episode, first given in semibreves, is varied first with crotchets in the violin part, and then enlivened with crotchets as triplets, *i.e.*, six crotchets in the bar as a counterpoint against the "whole notes" of the theme.

Digitized by Google

Before the final reappearance of the principal theme, we are taken into the remote key of B flat, in which key the theme of the second episode is presented again to us, first in the violin part, then as a bass in the piano part. Composers do not find it an easy task, as a rule, when the key of the semitone above is established, to pass back again to the original key of the semitone below, but Beethoven manages it with such consummate ease that the transition falls on the ear with an effect perfectly natural and convincing. The bass progression is worth quoting :—

Ex. 11.



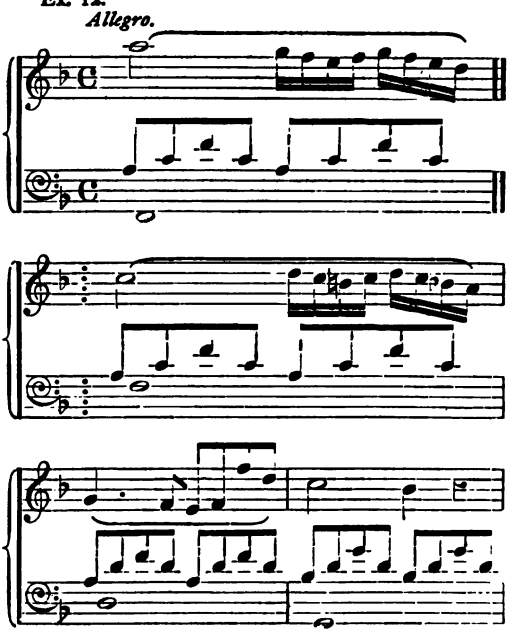
Having thus arrived at the dominant E of the original key, we have eight bars with E as a bass, thus reinstating the key of A minor, the original theme appearing now in the piano part as a bass. The movement is brought to a unisonal conclusion, *piano*.

We now come to one of the best known and most popular of the violin sonatas, No. 5, in F, Op. 24. Here, for the first time, the composer gives us four movements, the scheme being as follows :—Allegro, C time, F major; Adagio molto expressivo, three-four time, B flat major; Scherzo (allegro molto), three-four time, F major; Rondo, (allegro, ma non troppo), common time, F major.

The graceful opening theme of the first movement captivates the listener at once.

Digitized by Google

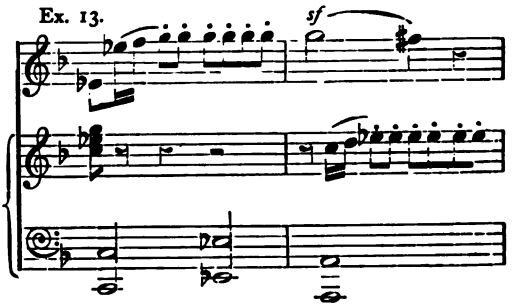
Ex. 12.



To save space I have here compressed the piano part into the bass clef. Yet, notwithstanding this eloquent opening, the subject matter which follows, and the treatment thereof, is brilliant rather than passionate or profound. The *ff* passage in unison (after the first full close in the dominant key of C) awakens expectation, but it subsides at the fourth bar to a *piano*. After a chromatic descending scale passage and uprising full chords in the piano part, the following fragment of the second subject is thus tossed about from one instrument to the other in imitation :—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 13.

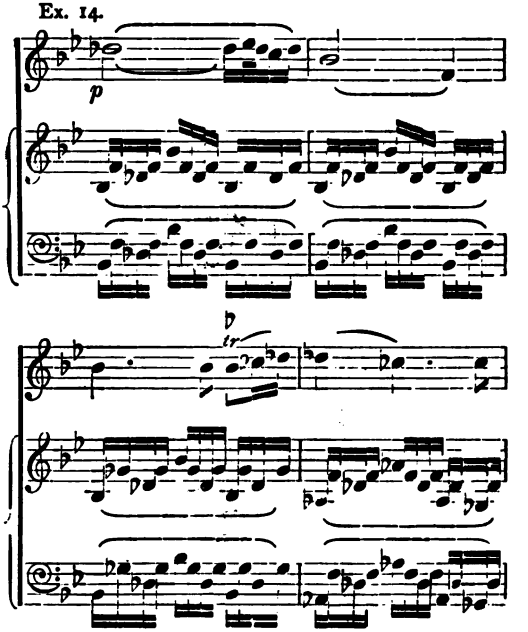


The development section appears to us curiously uninteresting for so great a master, and we are glad to get back to the beautiful opening theme, the return being effected through a shake on A and G sharp of several bars duration. In the coda, this theme appears with charming effect in the bass, echoed in alternate bars by the violin in the treble, against a triplet figure. In the final bars, the first four semiquavers of the theme become a mere repeated turn followed by a scale passage in unison for both the instruments, bringing the movement to a perfectly simple conclusion without fuss or demonstration of any kind. An enthusiastic but somewhat rhapsodical writer once spoke of the imitative passage in the coda as the "sea echoing the stars," but as the echo *comes first* the simile appears rather curious! However, Beethoven, in his Pastoral Symphony, gives us the lightning after the thunder, so our enthusiast was not without a precedent for the reversal!

The piano begins the theme of the adagio, which has a passage of truly noble feeling in the middle of the movement which we really must quote :—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 14.

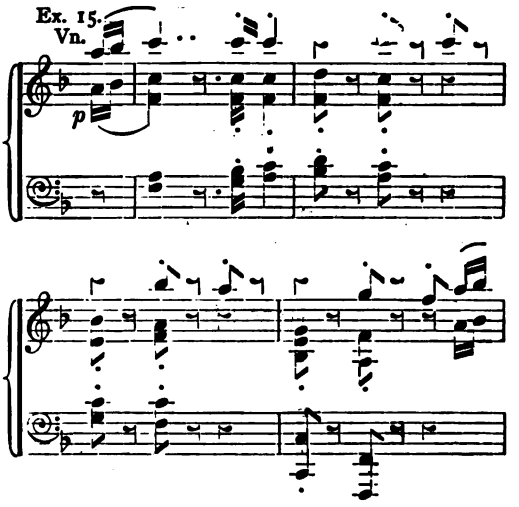


The modulation into G flat is surprisingly beautiful, and the deeper meaning given to the theme merely by flattening its initial note, is in itself quite a stroke of genius. One wishes this mood had been maintained to the end, but the conclusion of the adagio is elegant rather than profound.

In the scherzo we are treated to one of Beethoven's jokes. The violin part appears persistently against the rhythm of the piano part, and the clashing of harmonies which result may well cause unsophisticated listeners to imagine that violinist and pianist are really and unintentionally at variance. The student will probably find

Digitized by Google

some difficulty with this movement until it has been played several times with the piano.



The parts being readily distinguishable, I have given the violin part above the piano part.

The finale is a rondo of the usual "comfortable" character commonly associated with this species of composition. This, be it understood, applies to the contents of the music itself. Some passages will require care with respect to the intonation, the broken octaves in the violin part, for example, about the middle of the movement, though nothing in the sonata is of any great difficulty, a fact which has doubtless helped in attaining such a popularity. But it would not be Beethoven if, in the course of a generally easy piece, some passage of comparative difficulty did not sooner or later present itself as an obstacle to be surmounted by the earnest student

Digitized by Google

who aspires to play Beethoven with an outward ease and freedom.

The two sonatas we have been considering were originally published together in Vienna as Op. 23, with this title :—"*Deux sonates pour le Piano-Forte avec un Violon composées et dédies à Monsieur le Comte Maurice de Fries, Chambellan de S. M. J. et R. Par Louis van Beethoven, Œuvre, 23, à Vienne chez T. Moll et Comp.*"

The first two movements of the A minor sonata were written in 1800, and the publication took place in the autumn of the following year. Subsequently these two sonatas were given consecutive opus numbers.

Digitized by Google

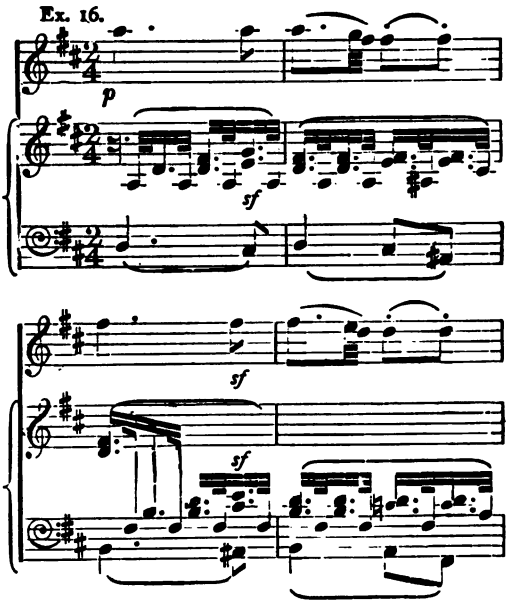
CHAPTER II.

The Piano and Violin Sonatas *(Continued)*.

THE three sonatas under Op. 30 are different indeed in mood. The first, in A major, consists of these three movements:—Allegro, three-four time, in A; Adagio, molt expressivo, two-four time, in D; and an Allegretto con variazioni, common time, in A. The first movement is graceful, almost pastoral in style, the interest is fairly shared between the two instruments, and in this respect especially the unity and balance of the work claim our admiration. It would be interesting to know what Beethoven's views would be concerning some of our most impassioned modern duets, I mean those in which each instrument, to the ordinary listener, appears to be striving for the mastery. If the first movement is still somewhat akin to Mozart, or perhaps even more to Schubert in its general feeling, we are amply convinced of Beethoven's powerful individuality in the Adagio. It is the most deeply felt movement of the three, and at the very outset there can be no mistaking the composer:—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 16.



The Allegretto in A with variations, forming the third section of the work, naturally invites comparison with the middle movement of the first sonata, also a theme with variations in the same key. Those belonging to Op. 30 are six in number, the last, an "Allegro ma non tanto" having to do duty as a finale, being more extended than the others. The A minor variation preceding this finale is lengthened out after a pause on the first inversion of the common chord of B flat in the thirty-second and thirty-third bars by a development of the rhythm o the last bar but one in the piano part of the origina, theme. This skipping motive, tossed from one instrument to the other, is worked for eighteen bars,

Digitized by Google

modulating back to the dominant of the original key, and forms a curious leading over to the final variation. The advance in style is not nearly so marked in this variation section as in the previous movement. In fact, it is not until we come to the great Kreutzer sonata and its wonderful Andante that Beethoven reveals his full powers in the metamorphosis of theme which in this particular form so plainly shows either a composer's individuality or his adherence to a few conventional patterns. For, although the variations—a large proportion of them being quite early works—of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and other classic composers of their times, are far removed from the odious vulgarity and "cheap" effects of the publisher's hacks who used to be, and perhaps still are, commissioned to torture some popular air into a convenient medium for the practice of scales and arpeggi; yet a certain recognisable similarity of treatment, though not always easy to define, is to be seen, so that, glancing at some of these variations at random, we cannot be immediately sure of the composer if previously unacquainted with the work. The eight bar sections with repeats were closely adhered to; in the second or third variations a continuous counterpoint in quavers (triplets) was pretty sure to make its appearance, and towards the end a slow one in the tonic or relative minor; frequently in the form of a funeral march, followed by a sprightly allegretto or allegro in six-eight time. But they never presented the air in its native simplicity, and clothed with the same harmonies in each variation, with uninterrupted scales and arpeggi which look as though to save time the writer had exercised his scissors upon an instruction book. The great masters gradually felt their way in exploring the possibilities lying hidden in some simple theme, its capabilities for new and beautiful harmonies, and for expansion—*i.e.*, the development of some short phrase suggested by the theme, into an entire movement. Often only the harmonies remind us of the actual theme; in Beethoven's piano variations in F, Op. 34, a fresh key is chosen for each variation. A certain Oxford professor, (may his

Digitized by Google

soul rest in peace) in a meagre chapter on variation writing in a work on form, concludes with this remarkable N.B.: "In making variations the *original bass* should never be altered"(!) Variations constructed on this principle would speedily bring us into agreement with those who in our own time find the form itself tedious! It *may* be exceedingly so, but in the hands of genius is capable of infinite development and variety, if we grasp the idea, that, in metamorphosis of theme combined with great rhythmic variety, rather than in mere embellishment of melody, lies the chief interest. As a modern instance, we may, in passing, refer to the wonderful example in Tschaïkowsky's A minor Trio, where movements of the most varied character, including a Waltz, a Fugue and a Mazurka spring from a simple theme, the last variation being expanded into a finale which in itself is an organic whole, regarded as a separate movement.

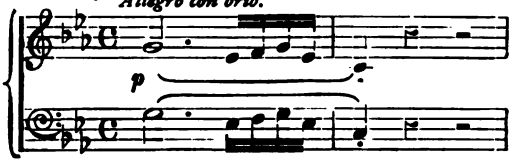
But to return to the theme which caused this digression. Beethoven originally intended the finale of the "Kreutzer" sonata to form the finale of the sonata we have just been discussing. But he considered this finale too brilliant (*i.e.*, as forming too great a contrast to the previous movements) and therefore substituted this theme with variations as being more in keeping with the rest. We have evidence here how deeply Beethoven pondered over, not merely the finish of each separate movement, but the æsthetic effect of each sonata as a whole.

The sonata in C minor, No. 2, Op. 30, is esteemed by musicians as one of the finest, nay, as the only one of the ten which rivals the "Kreutzer" in actual merit, if not in popularity. It has the following four movements:—Allegro con trio in C minor, common time; Adagio cantabile in A flat, common time; Scherzo-allegro in C, three-four time; Finale-allegro in C minor, common time. In the first movement, as in the "Pathetique" sonata, and the thirty-second for the piano alone, Beethoven storms along in quite a symphonic style. Surging billows seem to rise and fall in the development section, and the depths are troubled. The dainty second theme in E flat,

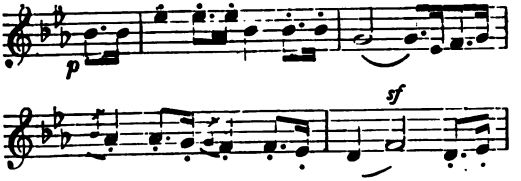
Digitized by Google

with its simple counterpoint in quavers, is in admirable contrast to the more dramatic first subject.

Ex. 17. *Allegro con brio.*



Ex. 18.



Very concise is this leading *motif*, which dominates the whole movement. We know that Beethoven usually had in his mind some mental picture or poetical idea when composing, at least, in the case of many of his greatest works, although he seldom cared to label his compositions after our modern fashion; the titles given to his piano sonatas, for example, being for the most part not his own, but those of the publishers. When questioned as to the meanings of sonata movements, he was reticent, or disposed to turn aside the question with vague replies, half in jest, yet perhaps furnishing some slight clue to his mood, when composing the work, such as "The conflict between head and heart" (Sonata in E minor, Op. 90); "Go and read Shakespeare's 'Tempest'" (Sonata Apassionata). If one might suggest, not indeed a title for this fine movement, but an idea for the private consideration of violinist and pianist when about to render it, it would be, to regard it as the impression of a stormy day at sea. It is by no means suggested that precisely the

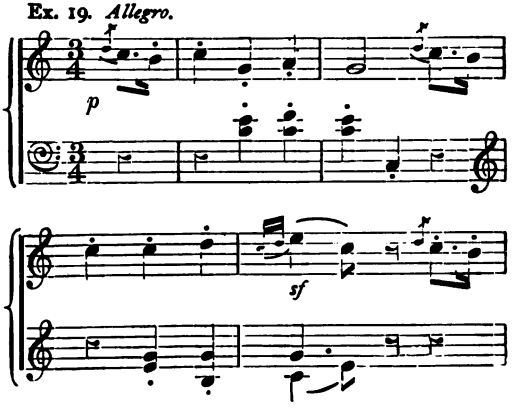
Digitized by Google

same idea would necessarily be conveyed to the listener, but that in concerted music of deep significance some suitable idea in common would help to secure unity in the reproduction of the music. At any rate, if treated in the pastoral and idyllic manner appropriate to some of the previous sonatas, would not the rendering be foredoomed to failure as a misconception?

After the storm, a calm. The placid melodiousness of the Adagio cantabile gives the necessary relief to the vigorous Allegro. The ascending arpeggi in semi-quavers, and the rapid scale passages further on in demisemiquavers must not be conceived of as a return to the mood of the stormy opening movement; due regard must be paid to the composer's express indication "*sempre leggieramente*" at the outset. For a moment, nearer the end, the rushing septuplets, *ff* seem about to usher in some vigorous, dramatic thought; nothing, however, happens, but a quiet presentment of the principal theme in the tonality of F. Light and clear rather than brilliant should be the demisemiquavers in the pianist's part in the final bars.

The Scherzo is in Beethoven's earlier style:—

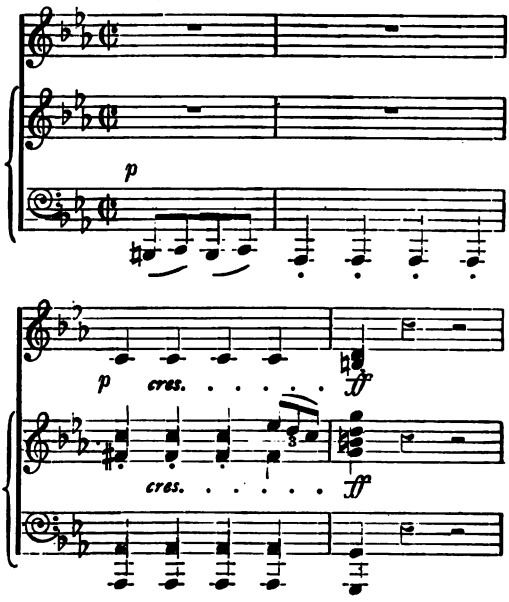
Ex. 19. *Allegro.*



Digitized by Google

Rather curiously, the Trio section is also in C major. The violin part is imitated canonically by the piano in the bass, with arpeggi in triplets as an accompanimental figure. The opening of the finale at once proves that the mood of the first movement is to dominate the whole sonata, and that both middle movements are intended to show this up by affording the necessary contrast in the strongest light.

Ex. 20. *Allegro.*



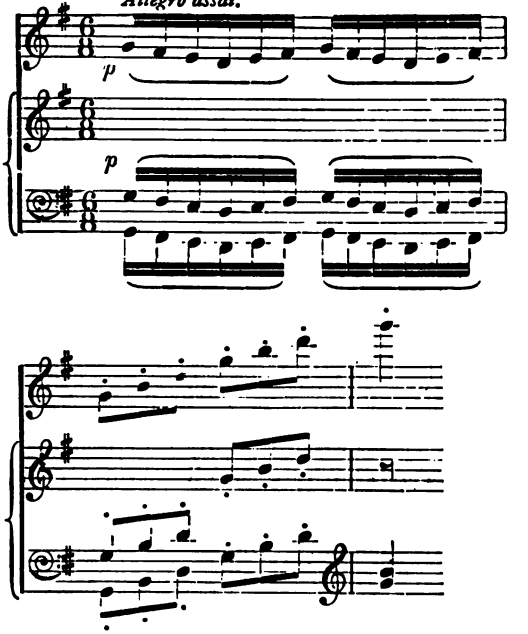
We are borne along with irresistible energy until the movement culminates in a presto. In the first and last movements of this fine sonata there is more scope and indeed necessity for breadth of tone and style on the part

Digitized by Google

of both players than in any of the more pastoral and idyllic previous works we have been discussing.

The eighth sonata, Op. 30, No. 3 in G, consists of three movements:—Allegro assai, six-eight time, G major; Tempo di minuetto, in E flat, three-four time; Allegro vivace, in G, two-four time. With great vivacity both instruments announce the opening subject in unison.

Ex. 21. *Allegro assai.*



This semiquaver figure is made extensive use of. We meet with it, confirming the key of the super tonic (A major), directly after the short second subject which enters at bar twenty in the orthodox dominant key of D. It is then interpolated between two short two-bar phrases, first

Digitized by Google

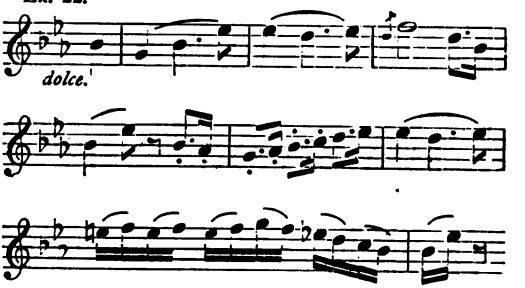
in the key of D, and then in G, like a mysterious echo of the *ff* close in A before alluded to; then new subject matter follows in three-part counterpoint, and fresh developments, including a passage wherein the key of D is established; all this before the real development or "free fantasia" section is reached. We have, it is true, the orthodox close in the dominant and repeat of the whole of the first section, yet a careful study of this first movement will show how far in advance of all other composers Beethoven had already gone in this Op. 30. I cannot call to mind any "first movement" of the Mozartean period in which the composer had given us members of his first subject immediately after the presentment of the first portion of his second subject, the secondary group of themes being immediately resumed. Yet everything follows in the most natural and convincing manner, and "variety in unity" was never better shown than here, so that the satisfactory result obtained justifies, as usual, Beethoven's departure from the ordinary treatment of the sonata form. The real development section contains only twenty-three bars; shakes of half a bar duration being tossed from one instrument to the other against a semiquaver accompaniment in the piano. Then in the key of C sharp minor the first subject rolls mysteriously in the depths, and is lightly imitated by the violin above the staff, modulating through B minor and A minor so as to enter with an exact repetition of the opening bars as already shown in Example 21. The after portion follows orthodox procedure, the dominant portion of the first section is duly transposed into the tonic key, with only four bars added by way of coda.

The Tempo di Minuetto is an exquisite movement. What deep feeling Beethoven is able to express through the medium of this old dance form! Observe the additional indication "*ma molto moderato e grazioso.*" It is the minuet idealised. Surely the very dancers must have paused to listen if such lovely melodies were ever provided for them, unless their brains were entirely located in their heels! The first eight bar section—too long to

Digitized by Google

quote in these columns, and which we will not spoil by curtailment—is virtually a delicious duet for the two instruments with a simple bass; the violin repeating the melody just given by the piano, and closing again in the tonic. The responsive section leads to G minor. There is no formal trio section, but another beautiful melody, which a soulful violinist can make much of is announced in the middle portion. We give the melody only, the accompaniment being a single triplet figure:—

Ex. 22.



When this has been heard by each instrument in turn, there is a responsive melody in E flat minor, and a return to the principal theme. The theme shown in Example 22 reappears, but breaks off at the sixth bar when the piano has it with a chord of the sixth on C (C, E flat, A natural), and a considerably extended coda follows, in which the principal theme is alternated between the two instruments in the shortest *motifs* into which the melody could well be subdivided. But, after all, what are words and the dry bones of analysis in face of a movement of such unalloyed beauty? Put aside your showy concert pieces, gentle reader; secure a sympathetic pianist, and play it, with a certain inward feeling and refinement of expression, and the ears must be dull indeed which prove insensible to its charm. Be sparing with your close shake; purity of tone, well proportioned accents, and

Digitized by Google

carefully graduated crescendi and diminuendi, with good rhythmic feeling are the chief essentials for the satisfactory reproduction of such inspirations as these.

The allegro vivace, in G major, certainly justifies its title. The semiquaver figure with which it starts is but seldom interrupted, so that it is a kind of anticipation of the "Perpetuum mobile" of later writers, although the continuity is preserved now by one instrument, now by the other. It is in the form of a rondo, and during its merry course the principal theme is transferred into the keys of C and E flat with excellent effect;—an effect all the greater from the persistent adherence to the original tonic in the rest of the movement.

Dr. A. B. Marx, the distinguished German theorist and writer on musical æsthetics, regards the remarkable trio of sonatas grouped under Op. 30, as being full of especial charm and heartiness; "wonderful elves which leap forth spontaneously from the strings, stealing imperceptibly through the ear into the soul, leading us we know not whither, captivating us we know not how." Much violin music of the virtuoso type remains at that outer portal, the ear, merely arousing curiosity and wonder by reason of difficulties overcome; let us then be thankful that Beethoven remains to us, a perennial spring of purest melody. Of him, perhaps it may be said more truly than of any other composer save Bach:—

> "Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale
> His infinite variety."

These three sonatas (succeeded by an equally remarkable set of three for the piano alone under Op. 31) were written in 1802, and saw the light in May of the following year, the original title running as follows:—

"*Trois Sonates pour le Pianoforte avec l'accompagnement d'un Violon, composées et dediées a Sa Majesté Alexandre I. Empereur de toutes les Russies par Louis van Beethoven, Œuvre XXX. A Vienne au Bureau d'Arts et d'Industrie.*"

"With the accompaniment of a violin" reads somewhat curiously to us, considering the perfectly impartial

Digitized by Google

manner in which the themes are given to each instrument in turn.

We come now to the violin sonata which is known the best of all to concert goers, the famous "Kreutzer," Op. 47, and certainly no violin sonata deserves so well such frequent repetition and wide-spread popularity as this perennially fresh inspiration of Beethoven. Rodolphe Kreutzer (born Versailles, 1766, died Geneva, 1831) was violin professor of the newly formed Paris Conservatoire in Beethoven's time. He was a fairly prolific composer, as well as a celebrated violin virtuoso;—nineteen concertos, two double concertos, fifteen string quartets, etc., were written by him, but the celebrated Forty Studies for the violin and the dedication we are now alluding to, alone keep his memory fresh. He succeeded Rode as solo violinist at the Grand Opera, and was chamber musician to the first Napoleon. Beethoven made his acquaintance in 1802, when Kreutzer visited Vienna in the suite of General Bernardotte, Ambassador of Bonaparte. Hector Berlioz remarks concerning this dedication, "*Il faut convenir que l'hommage était bien adressé. Aussi le célèbre violon ne pent-il jamais se decider à Jouer cette composition outrageusement inintelligible.*" It seems incredible that a composer whose above-mentioned Forty Studies are such an excellent preparation to Beethoven's works, should fail to understand and appreciate the sonata and the honour done him; but the situation is by no means singular. Beethoven's pupil, Ferdinand Ries, says that the sonata was originally written for Bridgetower. George Augustus Polgreen Bridgetower, to give him his full name, was partly African, partly Polish, or German by birth, domiciled in London, and a member of Salomon's orchestra. He was known in musical circles as the "Abyssinian Prince." He evidently had an immense opinion of his own importance, for he left a note on his copy of the work to the effect that Beethoven was so delighted with a Cadenza introduced by him in the ninth bar of the *Presto* (in imitation of the piano cadenza in the eighteenth bar), that he jumped up from his seat and

Digitized by Google

embraced him, crying out, "*Noch einmal, mein lieber Bursch.*" ("Once more, my dear fellow.") We are disposed to believe that this statement is an ingenious mingling of truth and falsehood. Probably some repetition was desired by the composer, but for a very different reason to that assigned by the violinist. And this view of the case is borne out by Czerny, who, speaking of this particular occasion, says that Bridgetower played the sonata extravagantly, and was, in consequence, laughed at by the composer. Further, Bridgetower admits to having had a quarrel with the composer, giving this (without entering into details) as the reason why the intended dedication was withdrawn.

The sonata was ready for publication in 1804, but was not in print until the following year. The last movement was already written in 1802, having been intended as a finale to Op. 30 under circumstances previously mentioned. Ries draws a parallel between this and the Horn Sonata, with respect to the difficulty Beethoven felt in finishing them to his satisfaction. He says, "In this case matters did not proceed much better, although a large part of the Allegro was finished betimes. Bridgetower pressed him very much because the day of the concert was already fixed, and he wished to practice his part. One morning Beethoven had me called to him as early as five o'clock and said, 'Copy me quickly this violin part of the first Allegro.' The piano part was only noted here and there. The wondrously-beautiful theme with variations in F major Bridgewater had to play at the concert in the Augarten in the morning at eight o'clock, from Beethoven's own manuscript, because there was no time for copying."

Turning to the work itself, its plan is as follows:—Adagio sostenuto (Introduction), three-four time, A major; Presto, common time, A minor; Andante con variazioni, two-four time, F major; Finale, Presto, six-eight time in A major.

The introduction is stately in manner, and for the first time in these sonatas the violin begins alone:—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 23 *Adagio sostenuto*

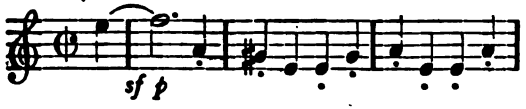
Note the intensity imparted to the phrase by the piano, repeating it with the F's natural instead of sharp.

I ought, perhaps, before proceeding further in what is practically a very late "review" of a work so well known to experienced violinists and concert-goers as this is, to advise those who are perfectly familiar with every bar of it, to skip this portion. But I am mindful of the fact that the keenest and most enthusiastic readers are often young students who are beginning to make their first practical acquaintance with the masterpieces of violin literature. For such, analysis of important works is useful, whilst to experienced and cultured violinists it is a weariness to find such compositions continually being dissected afresh.

An introduction awakens expectancy; indefiniteness of outline, vagueness as to tonality, sudden contrasts of tone, variety in rhythm, unexpected pauses and modulations are the material at the composer's disposal for producing this effect, and none knew better than Beethoven how to carry the listener from one surprise to another. We are brought at the eighteenth bar to a pause, *pp* in the key of D minor. Out of this the fiery Presto appears to dart from the bow, only to be arrested in its mad career at the end of its first phrase with a pause on the chord of C, and again with the piano cadenza on the same chord. To save space the violin part alone is given here, as the melody sufficiently suggests to anyone advanced enough to grapple with the work the plain harmonies with which the piano supports the violin.

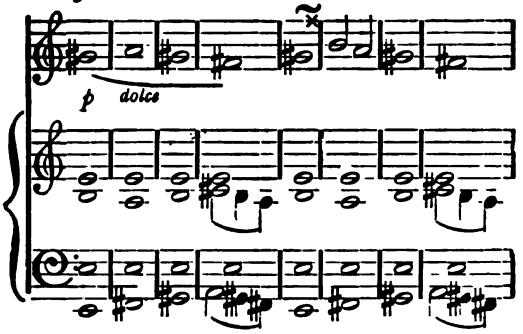
Digitized by Google

Ex. 24 *Presto*



In exquisite contrast to the stormy, impetuous principal subject is the tranquil *cantabile* second theme in E major beginning:—

Ex. 25



Not for long, however, do we remain thus lulled to repose, the billows rise again and bear us irresistibly onward. In the development section great use is made of the first two notes of the *presto*, as if the subject, as originally presented to us, were striving to enter on different degrees of the scale, and in various remote keys. The whole development portion is incomparably fine; Beethoven must have conceived it in a perfect fury of inspiration. Woe be to the unlucky intruder who interrupted when this spell was on him! Long holding notes with pauses over them now and again, arrest this impetuous utterance with the sense of a sudden shock, only, however, to let it loose again with renewed energy. The exquisite Andante which follows, laps us in dreams

Digitized by Google

of deepest peace and content. We have here one of the most beautiful melodies of the great master. And how simple its construction! As in many other cases in his Andantes and Adagios, the composer just moves up and down the scale with only here and there a leap. Why do certain themes such as this entrance musical listeners of all nationalities, whilst those written by lesser men (though equally correct and admirable from a purely constructive point of view), frequently produce utter weariness and impatience in us? No formulas, or the utmost display of mere cleverness enable us to write an immortal work, yet the *reasons* why we are affected in the one case so profoundly, and in the other can barely stifle a yawn, perpetually baffle the investigator. The variations are four in number. In the first the violin has nothing to do except give, as daintily as may be, some repeated notes in semiquavers above the triplet figure maintained throughout the piano accompaniment. In the second variation the piano has the melody in broken chords, whilst the violin has a sort of commentary upon and above it, in a thoroughly characteristic violin figure in demisemiquavers with legato and staccato bowing, mixed, in each group of four notes. In the third, in F minor, we are taken farther afield from our original theme, which appears in more obvious fashion in the more extended final variation decked out with many trills and florid figuration. The final *presto* is a worthy crown to the whole work. Compared with many a recent work, the part writing of this presto looks thin on paper, but though the notes are few and octaves and full-sounding chords made but little use of, the means are ample, and the effect brilliant when dashed off with the necessary fire and energy. The Russian novelist, Count Tolstoi, wrote a novel which borrows its title from this sonata. Very curious is the attitude of the novelist, or the "narrator" towards music generally:—"A terrible thing, this sonata" (says Pozdnisheff), "above all, the opening *Presto!* and music is a terrible thing generally. What is it? *Why* does it do what it does? Music makes

Digitized by Google

me forget my true situation. It transports me into a condition not my own. Under the influence of music I seem to feel what I do not feel, to understand what I do not understand, to be able to do what I am not capable of doing. Music transports me immediately into the condition of soul in which the composer of the music found himself at the time. My soul becomes confounded with his, and with him I pass from one state to another. Why so I cannot say. But Beethoven, who wrote the 'Kreutzer Sonata,' knew well why he found himself in a certain mood." The narrator then goes on to misread and degrade a noble work, finding in impassioned music of this description an incentive even to crime! That such music should not be performed unless some action corresponding to the excitement raised is to follow! and so forth. The simple nobility of the Andante does not touch him, that is dismissed as unimportant. Have we not here quite a revelation of the innate savagery underlying the Russian temperament? One is reminded of the heathen king who on first learning from a missionary monk of the sufferings of Christ at the hands of the Jews, started up, burning with indignation, eager to slay every Jew living in his dominions. So, in olden times did music, poetry, or narration actually overturn the reason in ill-balanced, unsophisticated temperaments.

The original title of this sonata ran as follows:—"*Sonata per il Pianoforte ed un Violino obbligato, scritta in un stilo molto concertante, quasi come d'un Concerto. Composta e dedicata al suo amico R. Kreutzer, Membro del Conservatorio di Musica in Parigi, Primo Violino dell' Academia delle Arti, e della Camera Imperiale, per L. Beethoven, Opera 47. A. Bonn, chez N. Simrock.*"

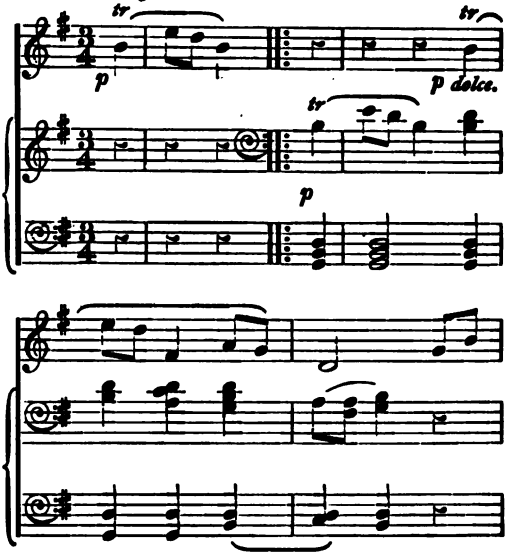
The tenth and last sonata is numbered Op. 96, and comprises the following movements:—Allegro moderato, three-four time in G major; Adagio expressivo, two-four time in E flat major; Scherzo, three-four time in G minor, and Poco allegretto, three-four time in G major.

We have not here so grand and noble-sounding a composition as the Kreutzer, or the C minor; a pastoral

Digitized by Google

feeling and the prevalence of dance rhythms permeates the entire work with the exception of the Adagio; nevertheless it is an enjoyable one to the players, if not so lofty in style as the two great works alluded to. The violin begins alone:—

Ex. 26. *Allegro moderato.*

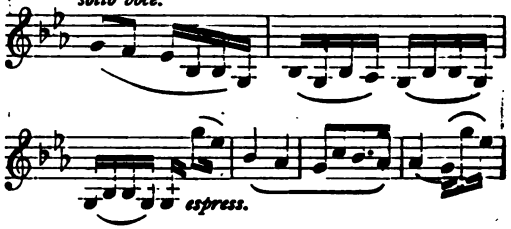


After announcing the first subject, triplets appear, and the second subject is in D; a charming modulation into B flat major is a noteworthy feature in this section; in the piano part continuous trills extending over nine bars occur in the right hand. Triplets are maintained throughout the whole of the development section until the repetition of the first subject, and the second subject duly appears transposed into G major with a coda which ends in a curiously abrupt fashion with a scale passage for both instruments in unison.

Digitized by Google

The Adagio expressivo is another of those slow-breathing melodies, chiefly moving up and down the scale in successive degrees. As usual, the piano first announces the whole of the first eight bar section, and the violin enters with an effective answering phrase, which should be played on the richest part of the violin, *i.e.*, the lowest octave of the fourth string.

Ex. 27. *sotto voce.*



The melody immediately following is evidently intended for the A and D strings, thus imparting a different tone-colour which Beethoven no doubt had here in his mind. The florid demisemiquaver and semidemi-semiquaver passages which follow (how ludicrous some of our nomenclature is; we should say, as the Germans do, thirty-second, and sixty-fourth notes), show the desirability of adopting a very slow time indeed for this Adagio, as these quicker notes must be played very smoothly, and without conveying any feeling of hurry or scramble, which would disturb the balance of the movement by presenting too violent a contrast to its reposeful serenity. No brilliant bravura is intended, no storm, only a gentle zephyr, with a softly murmuring accompaniment.

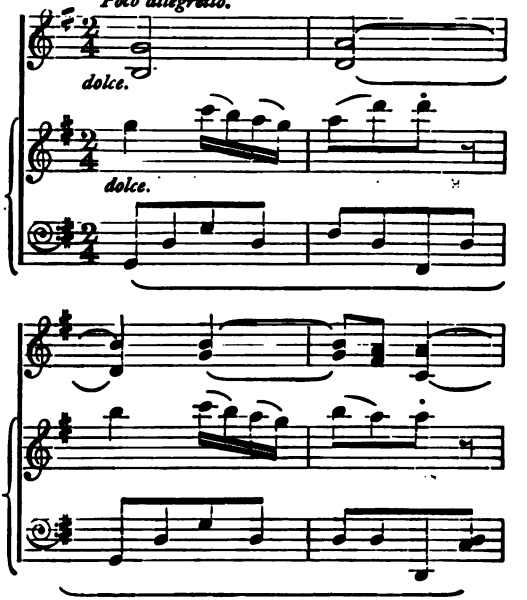
In the Scherzo both instruments have to play in a light staccato style; with a frequent forcing of the accent on the *third* beat, a freakish upsetting of the normal rhythm so often met with in Beethoven. The smooth and flowing legato melody of the trio affords an excellent contrast, and after due repetition of the first section the

Digitized by Google

coda is formed by a simple repetition of the principal theme into the tonic major, fourteen bars.

The *naiveté* of the finale is a little too much for seriously minded modern musicians. It certainly recalls the *zopf* period, rather than any period of Beethoven's—early, middle, or late—and we rub our eyes and ask "is this really Op. 96?" The theme might have been from one of Pleyel's Allegros, or some other imitator of Papa Haydn:—

Ex. 28. *Poco allegretto.*



A good deal of modulation into B major occurs in the variations (for such the form is, although the variations are not numbered and divided as in previous works), and a much-embellished "Adagio expressivo" occurs in the

Digitized by Google

middle. In a brief section in G minor Beethoven plays at fugue, but his intentions are not serious, although the piano *pp* enters in the bass with a four bar subject, duly answered in the "tenor," and the subject taken up by the violin; this section occupies but twenty-eight bars, when we get a repetition of the first subject. The movement closes with eight bars of Presto.

As I have given my own opinion concerning this movement (referring, be it understood, more particularly to the subject-matter itself than to the working out thereof, which is naturally not without Beethovenish touches), it will be interesting to quote here the widely different impressions this movement has made upon the minds of two previous writers.

A. Teetgen.—"It is hardly conceivable how the inspired giant of the 'Kreutzer' could have perpetrated (we had almost said) the allegretto of the latter. This Scotch jingle was not worthy of Beethoven's pen. There *are* Scotch melodies like tears fallen from the angels. This juvenile quadrille-time is too much! On the other hand, the Adagio expressivo is profoundly beautiful."

Prof. F. Niecks.—"The last movement (*Poco Allegretto*) —afterwards changed to *Adagio*, *Allegro*, *Adagio* and *Presto* —G major, three-four time, which has the variation form, jogs and gambols merrily along with a contented happiness that knows not of evil and sorrow. But enough! the best of music cannot be interpreted by words."

The student must form his own opinion after the due study which alone can make anyone's opinion of value. How often a work is undervalued because not thoroughly understood! On the other hand, a knowledge of the best work of a great composer makes us regret that which falls short of the high standard we have set up in our minds; it causes us to be severe upon work which in a lesser light we would praise.

The last three movements of this sonata were written in 1812, and the whole work was first heard at Prince Lobkowitz's in 1813, the performers being the composer's pupil, Archduke Rudolph (to whom it is dedicated),

Digitized by Google

and P. Rode. It was published in July, 1816, the original title being as follows:—

"*Sonate für Piano-Forte und Violin. Sr. Kaiserl, Hoheit dem durchlauchtysten Prinzen Rudolph von Osterrich, &c., &c., &c., in tiefer Ehrfurcht zugeeignet von Ludwig van Beethoven. 96 tes Werk. Eyenthum der Verleger. Wien bei S. A. Steiner und Comp.*" The composer who capped his brother's superscription on a visiting card of "Land Proprietor" with that of "Brain Proprietor," was evidently a little impatient of giving the whole of the Archduke's sub-titles, after the tedious custom of the times, notwithstanding his great respect for his patron. The three "etc.'s" are significant. We also notice that he very sensibly drops Italian for his native tongue, in the dedication.

As to the order of difficulty, and having sole regard to the violin part, we should be disposed to arrange the sonatas as follows.—

I., II., V., VI., III., IV., X., VIII., VII., IX.

The same order may not, however, suit everyone, and must only be regarded as approximate.

Good editions are fairly numerous, though there are not nearly so many as of the sonatas for piano alone. Nor are there any which have been edited with the same patient German thoroughness which no detail seems to escape, such as the Riemann, Germer, Klindworth, and Bulow editions of various classics. Were I a publisher, I would certainly like to approach Beethoven's greatest interpreter, Herr Joachim, upon this subject, and obtain from him the result of an intimate and life-long experience as to the best phrasing and fingering of every bar, with critical notes in the same spirit of thoroughness which marks some of the editions above-mentioned.* However, of those editions which are available, one of the most widely used is that of Peters, edited by F. David. Here Beethoven's phrasing is often revised and supplemented,

* In January of the present year (1902) Herr Peters issued an edition of the Sonatas, edited by Dr. Joachim; also Vol. I. of the String Quartets, edited by Dr. Joachim and Herr Andreas Moser.

Digitized by Google

yet in such a manner that we are frequently left in doubt as to which is Beethoven's original and which the suggested bowing and phrasing of this experienced violinist. An edition is published in Vienna by Wedl, edited by J. Dont. Dont had some actual personal recollections of Beethoven, and was well known in Vienna as a teacher, but rarely, so a pupil of his once informed me, appeared in public as a soloist, having made himself highly nervous with excessive drinking of strong black coffee, which in a hot climate especially affects the nerves and heart. He was a prolific writer of violin studies, the MSS. of which lay scattered about his room in great confusion. In Dont's edition the violin part may be had separately. The piano part is included in Breitkopf and Härtel's complete edition of Beethoven. In their "Volksausgabe" (Popular Edition) they may be had arranged for the use of violoncellists by Grutzmacher. The Litolff edition competes with the Peters in price, the sonatas are edited by Rauch. Schott's is in folio size and more expensive; they also publish the C minor sonata edited by Alard.

To the earnest violin student we would give the advice to turn frequently to Beethoven and Bach as a refining influence and as a corrective to the modern tendency in the direction of programme music; learning to discriminate between that which is merely "effective" and full sounding, and that which is of intrinsic value by reason of the nobility of the thoughts themselves and the masterly manner in which the ideas are developed. Music is not a mere sensuous charm for the ear—Beethoven thought not so lightly of the art—but an appeal to the intellect and the emotions equally, the ear being but the outer channel. In the perfect artist these things are finely balanced, and it is only with those who can thus enjoy music that the interest taken in it is able to survive even so severe an ordeal as the total loss of hearing, as in the case of the great master, a portion of whose works we have ventured to analyse and criticise.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

The Trios for Piano, Violin and Violoncello.

THE piano trios should next claim the attention of the Beethoven student. A piano trio is, of course, understood by musicians to signify a composition in sonata form for the piano, violin and violoncello, the interest being equally distributed over the three instruments; by "string trio," the more usual combination of violin, viola and violoncello, although there are other combinations, as, for instance, two violins and viola; or two violins and violoncello. The word trio has long since lost its significance as applied to the middle section of a march, or minuet. Though originally confined to three instruments, when used in this connection it merely indicates a second march, minuet, or other simple form, varied as to key and style, as a contrast to the first section, which is again reverted to that balance may be preserved in accordance with the demands of form.

Haydn's trios are, par excellence, the best preparation for those of Beethoven, and acquaintance with Mozart's should also previously be made, on historical grounds as well as technical. As we get further into the realm of

Digitized by Google

chamber music—and what a wealth of exquisite ideas lies open there for the enthusiastic student—the real difficulty in the way of their proper study lies in forming a trio, or quartet party, each member of whom is at about the same stage of musical advancement. It is hardly to be expected that students with real musical feeling will care to play frequently with one who is a bad timist, or an indifferent sight reader; nor will the advanced player who may be able to attempt Brahms and Tschaïkowsky much enjoy being confined to the excellent educational works of Pleyel, or even the Haydn Trios. But a musician, however advanced, can always find enjoyment in Beethoven. We have not "progressed" so far as to relegate this great master's writings to the upper shelf whereon are kept the toy books of our childhood. The best and final test of excellence is the production of works at high-class concerts; when they cease to be heard at all, they may be said to have fulfilled their mission, and remain only as more or less venerable landmarks showing the progress of our art. We are pleased to call certain compositions "immortal," yet I suspect that music is, owing to fluctuations of taste, more or less perishable, and perhaps the word "immortal" cannot be applied in a strict sense to any composer's writings. As time rolls on, each composer is represented, so far as the public is concerned, at any rate, by an ever-lessening selection of his most characteristic works. But if particular thoughts and ideas, enjoyed by one generation, are found insipid and uninteresting by another, we may take comfort, as musicians, in the fact that our art itself, being divine, is immortal.

In some of the Haydn Trios, the violoncello has a very humble part to play—little more than a mere doubling of the piano bass. Hadyn wrote no less than thirty-five piano trios; the selection of six in one volume in the Litolff edition may be recommended to students who may not wish to possess the complete editions. With these preparatory remarks we may now proceed to speak of the piano trios of Beethoven.

Digitized by Google

Although described as Opus 1, the first three trios in E flat, G and C minor, were not actually the first published compositions of the master. The three juvenile piano sonatas (in E flat, F minor and D) appeared as early as 1783; the trios, Op. 1, in the spring of 1795. They were published in Vienna by Artaria, and are dedicated to his patron and admirer, Prince Carl von Lichnowsky. He had at this period just completed his studies in counterpoint, canon and fugue with Albrechtsberger, and not entirely to the satisfaction of that pedagogue, who even went so far as to remark to an enquiring student, "Have nothing to do with him, he has learnt nothing, and will never do anything in a decent style!" There could be but little real sympathy between the genuis to whom such studies were but a means to an end, who had the daring to think for himself when confronted with venerable rules which were no longer in sympathy with modern art, and the pedant to whom tradition was everything, and who was unable to realise that genius manifests itself by overstepping the bounds of custom and creating fresh laws for its own guidance. It seems strange to us that these early works of Beethoven should have been considered by many musicians of repute as unnatural, bizarre or affected. Yet even Haydn advised him not to publish the third trio of the set we are now considering, although Beethoven felt it to be the best.

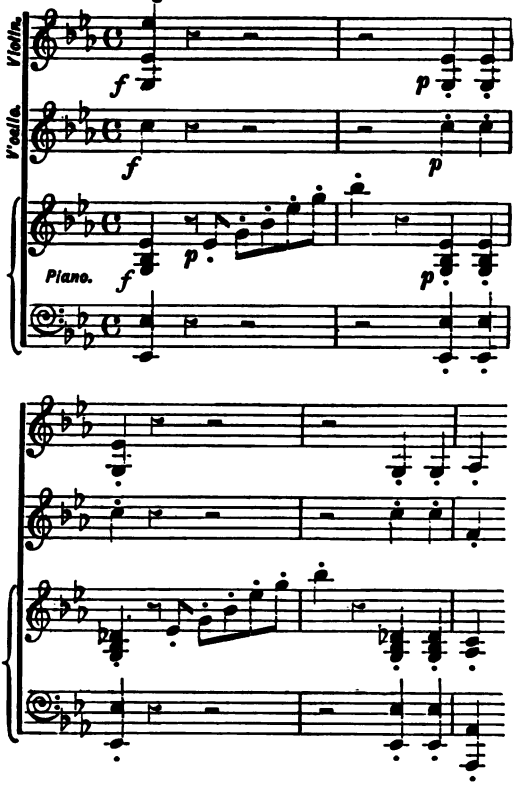
The First Trio, in E flat, has the following movements:

(1). Allegro in E flat, common time.
(2). Adagio Cantabile in A flat, three-four time.
(3). Scherzo, Allegro assai, in E flat, three-four time.
(4). Finale, Presto in E flat, two-four time.

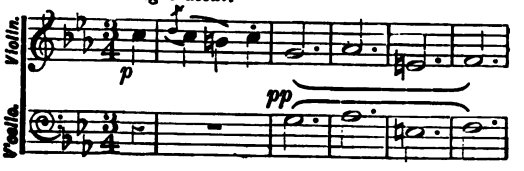
As a rule, at the outset of a piece a composer instinctively avoids the key of the sub-dominant as being difficult to get back from, but in this first movement Beethoven modulates into it at once. Such an opening certainly arrests attention, but to the present writer's mind, at least, it gives the curious impression of something having preceded it:—

Digitized by Google

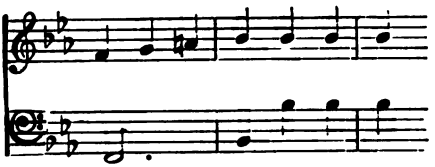
Ex. 1. *Allegro.*



Ex. 2. *Allegro assai.*



Digitized by Google



Like other early works of Beethoven, the general complexion of the music is Mozartean, with only here and there a hint of the composer's more powerful individuality. The Adagio Cantabile is mellifluous enough, but so entirely in Mozart's style as to call for no special comments. In the next movement it is noticeable that the minuet form is already dropped—not, however, to be entirely abandoned—for the freer one of the Scherzo. None like Beethoven have so fully realised the sportiveness implied by the title. Later composers—Chopin, Schumann, and Brahms especially—have approached the scherzo in a more serious vein, but with Beethoven the humour of the thing is apparent enough from first to last. We do not, however, in this early scherzo meet with those displacements of the ordinary principles which govern accentuation, already spoken of in connection with the Sonatas. I. von Seigfried gives us a glimpse behind the scenes with respect to those moods of the composer:—"If a sudden change of time (rhythm, accent?), particularly in the *scherzi* of his symphonies, threw all the players into confusion, he would burst into a roaring laugh, and declare that he never expected anything else, had been aiming at that all along, and would exhibit an almost childish delight at having overthrown such well-mounted cavaliers."

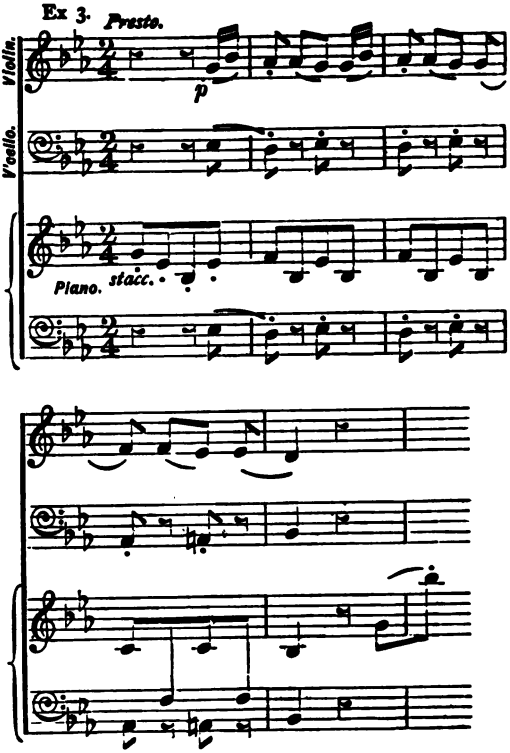
The scherzo in this trio, thus early defying conventionality, starts off with the two-stringed instruments alone in the key of C minor (although the movement is in E flat), with a complete close at the seventh and eighth bars in the key of B flat. As the piano only enters at these bars with dominant and tonic chords in this key of B flat to confirm the modulation, it is here omitted.

Digitized by Google

The phrase is repeated *pp* with the piano in unison, this time closing in E flat, and the first double bar section closes in the dominant of this key. The trio section is short; it is in the key of A flat, the two strings having sustained dotted minims against the crotchets—chiefly unisonal—of the piano.

The finale (Presto) reminds us of Haydn—three preparatory bars for the piano ushering in the strings:—

Ex 3. *Presto.*



Digitized by Google

The second trio is in G major, with the following movements:—

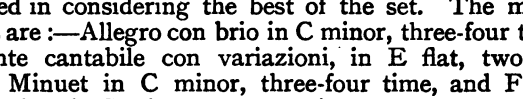
Adagio, three-four time in G. Allegro vivace, two-four time in G. Largo con expressione, six-eight time in E. Scherzo, three-four time in G. Presto, two-four time in G.

The opening Adagio serves merely as an introduction to the Allegro vivace. Great use is made of the second bar of this Allegro, a simple phrase of five notes in the development section, where it appears as a bass on every possible degree of the scale, subsequently augmented to notes of double value (Peter's edition, page 51). The Largo is a thoughtful movement with some fine passages evolved from the theme in a manner highly characteristic of the composer. The Scherzo, with its somewhat old style trio, calls for no special notice; we can well understand how the composer in his maturity—when even the ever popular septett gave him no satisfaction—would care to hear such movements as these singled out for praise by those who were probably quite incapable of understanding the creations of the ripened artist! The finale is vivacious to a degree, and makes an excellent piece for use by itself at miscellaneous concerts where the programme is not entirely classical, and on occasions when a whole trio would be considered too long.

The next trio is the one which Haydn advised Beethoven not to publish, and which Beethoven was certainly justified in considering the best of the set. The movements are:—Allegro con brio in C minor, three-four time; Andante cantabile con variazioni, in E flat, two-four time; Minuet in C minor, three-four time, and Finale Prestissimo in C minor, common time.

In the opening Allegro con brio, the three instruments begin softly in unison:—

Ex. 4 *Allegro con brio.*



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
EDA KUHN LOEB MUSIC LIBRARY
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASS.
Digitized by Google

The violin part only is quoted, as the 'cello doubles it in the octave below, and the piano doubles the both parts, with, however, a turn on the first note in the right hand part.

A pause however is made on the dominant in the tenth bar, and a new idea started by the piano. The third bar of the above extract suggests to the composer possibilities of effective modulation, notably after the first double bar, where, the initial phrase being transposed into the key of E flat minor, the piano immediately prepares the way enharmonically for a brief excursion into B major, thus :—

Ex. 5.

The variations on the following Andante cantabile are five in number; in the last the violin has the theme in effective double stops on the lower two strings, the 'cello, the bass, and the piano, chromatic semiquaver triplets, the whole making a very rich effect. The Minuet in C minor is further inscribed "Quasi Allegro," and has its trio in the tonic major. The word "Prestissimo" given to the finale must not be interpreted too literally! One would like to know the actual tempo approved by Beethoven in this and some other movements similarly named by him. Composers might leave to posterity as a record, more reliable and permanent than metronome values, the exact number of minutes which, in their opinion, the movement ought to take, even though to write down "as fast as possible" and then assign a limit, would certainly add another inconsistency to those already existing in music. The term itself gives some justification for sensationalism in playing by virtuosi, whose "prestissimo" will naturally be a very different tempo to the amateur's, it being understood that clearness must not be sacrificed to speed, or the player's technique

Digitized by Google

strained to a degree which invites not merely an occasional false note, but a complete breakdown. To the listener, the effect of quick movements can only be good when the performers are (seemingly at all events) at ease in the tempo, when everything appears natural, and devoid of any feeling of undue strain or hurry. As there are no quicker notes than quavers in the movement under notice, the familiar practice of subdividing the time when reading new music should not be resorted to, but fairly quick minim beats insisted upon from the first, whether the time be counted audibly or only mentally felt. The absence of awkward passages robs the movement of any terrors which the word "prestissimo" may have excited in the student's breast.

The fourth trio is in B flat, is numbered Op. 11. It was published in October, 1798, and is dedicated to the Countess von Thunn, the mother of Prince Lichnowsky. The violin part, with very little alteration, is also given by the composer to the B flat clarionet as an alternative combination with piano and violoncello. The movements are as follows:—

Allegro con brio in B flat, common time; Adagio in E flat, three-four time; Theme with Variations on an Italian air, "Pria ch'io l'impegno," in B flat, common time. The Adagio is the most interesting movement of the trio. The expressive melody started by the violoncello is repeated by the violin, the piano imitating its short phrases. It is worth the student's while to notice the effective use that is made of the two opening phrases —each of three notes only—by imitation, in this short and altogether beautiful Adagio, and especially towards the close. For the Theme with variations we have little liking; coming after this soulful Adagio it sounds like an early work made to do duty as a finale. The variations are nine in number, and are somewhat curious. Variation I. is a piano *solo;* Variation II. a duet for the other two instruments, and the final variation leads to a brief Allegro in six-eight time, starting in G, but after a dozen bars only changes its key signature to that of B flat,

Digitized by Google

and in the last four bars its time signature back again to common time. Respecting this trio, Sir George Grove in his biographical notice of Beethoven in the "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" says:—"This is the composition which brought Steibelt and Beethoven into collision, to the sad discomfiture of the former. Steibelt had shown him studied neglect till they met at Count Freis's, at the first performance of this Trio, and he then treated him quite *de haut en bas*. A week later they met again, when Steibelt produced a new Quintet, and extemporised on the theme of Beethoven's Finale, an air from Weyl's 'Amor marinaro.' Beethoven's blood was now fairly up; taking the 'cello part of Steibelt's Quintet, he placed it upside down before him, and making a theme out of it, played with such effect as to drive Steibelt from the room. Possibly this fracas may account for Beethoven's known dissatisfaction with the Finale." But to any musician who has frequently played the Beethoven trios, the music itself sufficiently conveys the impression of inferiority to the previous movements. In most of the cases where Beethoven has used some melody by a contemporary composer as a theme for variations the result cannot be compared in interest to the exquisite original themes and their splendid treatment. As the fountain of inspiration does not at all times flow freely even with the most highly gifted, it may be that the themes of other writers are regarded by them as useful to work at in the less inspired moments.

Beethoven was, before all things, a progressive composer. Whilst some famous men have produced some of their best work at quite an early period in their career, as, for example, Mendelssohn and his "Midsummer Night's Dream" music, and the beautiful octet for strings in Op. 20, at the age of seventeen, Beethoven's career, on the other hand, was one of steady development. Consequently we find his music increase in interest with the advance in the Opus numbers. From Op. 11 to Op. 70 represents a large interval of creative activity in other departments, including such important works as the first six

Digitized by Google

symphonies and sixteen of the piano sonatas. The two trios under Op. 70 support our statement, being, as a whole, of greater value than any of the preceding. This *crescendo* of interest reaches its climax in the great trio which follows these—Op. 97, a work which has certainly never been excelled in trio form for the nobility of its themes. But to return to Op. 70. These two numbers are inscribed to the Countess Marie von Erdödy. They were published in October, 1809, by Brietkopf and Härtel, with which firm the composer became associated for the first time in March of this year. Sir George Grove speaks of 1809 as the "most brilliant and astonishing year of Beethoven's life" in respect to publication, adducing, in support of this statement, the appearance of the following important works—the fourth, fifth and sixth symphonies, the violin concerto and the finest of the violoncello sonatas—that in A, Op. 69. Truly, if Beethoven had given nothing else to the world, it would have been a life well spent!

Beethoven's friends had undoubtedly trying times with the eccentricities and caprices of genius, but the underlying nobility of character caused much to be condoned. There was, however, an unfortunate rupture with his friend and patron, Prince Lichnowsky, about this period, and the composer found a home in the house of the Countess Erdödy, hence the dedication.

The fifth trio has the following movements:—Allegro, vivace e con brio, in D, three-four time; Largo assai ed expressivo in D minor, two-four time; Presto in D, common time. The three instruments again begin the first movement with a few bars in unison, when the 'cello leads off with an expressive melody, imitated by, and forming a duet with, the violin a couple of bars later. Those opening bars play an important part throughout the movement, and the composer sticks to his text so consistently that the movement impresses one as having been conceived at a single sitting. The Largo is, however, by no means so easily comprehended at a first hearing. It has been termed the "Ghost," and

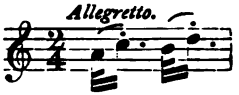
Digitized by Google

certainly shows us Beethoven in a curious mood. The one-bar theme with which the piano enters furnishes the text for this mysterious movement, and there is much tremolo work of a quasi-orchestral character. The subdivision of notes is carried to such an extreme that we find at times semidemisemiquavers (sixty-fourth notes) in sextolets; one bar frequently occupying a whole line in the Edition Peters. We know not what inspired this singular movement; perhaps there was a haunted room in the Countess's house! But if some clue must be found in order to satisfy the British public (which so dearly loves a programme) we would suggest its being re-named the "Sphinx" as a title sufficiently definite and indefinite, being at once less derogatory to the composer, and less at variance with his known views on this point. The Presto is a very attractive movement; the most interesting finale we have as yet met with in the trios. Two four-bar phrases ending, the first with a pause on the chord of F sharp major, the second on the dominant of the original key, awaken an expectancy which shall not be disappointed, for the movement presses onward with an irresistible life and gaiety, and is moreover equally grateful to players and listeners.

The second trio of this Opus is in E flat. The movements are: Poco sostenuto in E flat, common time; Allegro ma non troppo, in E flat, six-eight time; Allegretto in C, two-four time; Allegretto ma non troppo, in A flat, three-four time; Finale Allegro in E flat, two-four time. The poco sostenuto, though not formally labelled "Introduction," serves as such to the allegro, the three instruments entering imitatively, at one bar's distance, in the following order, 'cello, violin, piano. Its nineteen bars occupy just a page, ushering in the real business of the movement with a pause on the dominant. A few bars before the close of this allegro, the poco sostenuto reappears in an altered and curtailed form. The two allegrettos are unique, each in a very different way; the first by the quaintness of the little skipping figure which plays such an important part throughout it.

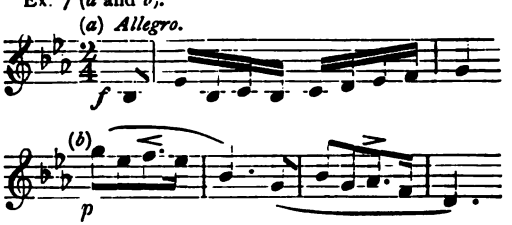
Digitized by Google

Ex. 6.



The second Allegretto is a gem in its quiet, refined beauty. Its lovely melodies would require a page of quotation at least, so we must refrain from making such a demand upon valuable space, and refer the eager student to the music itself. Such melodies are pearls to be treasured; insensate indeed to real music must those ears be upon which such inspirations fall unheeded! Simple in the extreme, yet full of charm, is the close, based upon detached fragments of the initial theme. The final allegro, again, in first movement form, is different in conception, yet no less interesting than the finale of its companion.

Ex. 7 (*a* and *b*).



How much is evolved from these two sections (*a*, *b*) of the principal theme can only be seen by a careful analysis which will well repay the student. The second subject, in the key of G, is brief in the extreme, and the composer quickly passes from it to his initial idea (*a*). In the printed copies, the phrasing at (*b*), both in the piano and the violin parts, is made to include the note G of the

Digitized by Google

second bar in the first phrase, yet the musical idea requires that the B flat should be separated from the G (whether we bow the G as a separate note or not). The phrasing here shown is suggested as being that really intended. Beethoven's caligraphy was notoriously difficult to decipher, and the exact limit of the legato sign is also one which requires much attention in reading first proofs, as the engravers frequently lengthen them out or curtail them in error. This trio is of greater length than any of its predecessors, the piano score occupying no less than forty-three pages in the Edition Peters. Although this length has often been exceeded by modern trios, it was probably a record for the period.

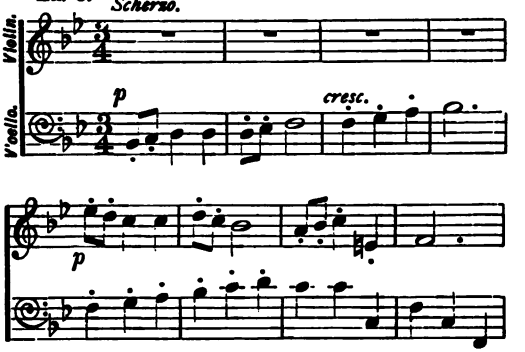
The grandest of all the piano trios, that in B flat, Op. 97, began to occupy Beethoven's mind, simultaneously with a string quartet in F minor, and the music to "Egmont," in the year 1810. This is proved by the sketch books of this date, which show various themes from these works in their original conception. Beethoven had now a new pupil and a most influential friend in the Archduke Rudolph, and this trio, with several other important works, were dedicated to him. It was completed in the same year, and the autograph bears date March 3rd and 26th. Those were stirring times in Vienna; the French had occupied the city the previous year, but Beethoven's creative faculty was not to be denied its natural outlet even in war-time. As no copyist was obtainable, the Archduke played over the piano part from the composer's MS. It was, however, not published until 1816, when along with the Violin Sonata, Op. 96, it appeared in July of that year. Beethoven's last public appearance in concerted music, in 1814, was in this very trio. We can only guess what a powerful impression it must have made upon those who were capable of understanding it.

The movements are :—Allegro moderato in B flat, common time; Scherzo, Allegro in B flat, three-four time; Andante Cantabile, ma però con moto, in D, three-four time; Allegro moderato in B flat, two-four time.

Digitized by Google

The first movement is noteworthy for the firmness and decision of its two principal themes, and for the use of the key of the sub-mediant, G, for the second subject, instead of the more usual dominant. Out of twenty-six piano sonatas, Sir George Grove notes that the dominant is used seventeen times, the mediant three times, and the sub-mediant three times for the second subject. The Scherzo is a very characteristic movement. It starts very playfully with the 'cello alone, followed by the violin, the piano responding at the sixteenth bar, with same phrase in eight bars of solo.

Ex. 8. *Scherzo.*



The strings then combine *pizzicato* with piano, and the violin enters with a beautiful melodic phrase which is a *variante* of the opening one. Later, the key changing to the tonic minor, the 'cello starts a mysterious chromatic passage, and after piano and violin have participated in its serpentine windings, a sprightly dance tune in the key of D flat bursts out. This constitutes the "trio" or middle section of the movement; but the composer repeats the whole movement from the beginning, including this middle section, and after that, the first section, with the parts slightly altered in their working out between the three instruments. A coda is formed

Digitized by Google

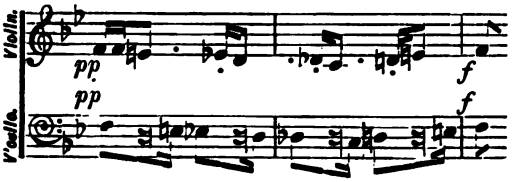
out of the chromatic figure just alluded to, and the scherzo ends with a simple ascending scale passage begun by the piano, *pp*; the last four notes by all three instruments in unison with a sudden *ff*.

The Andante is one of Beethoven's divinest melodies. Like the beautiful Andante of the "Kreutzer" sonata, a melody which mainly moves up and down the scale by conjunct degrees, is made to raise us above all external matters into a sphere of ineffable content. How original the first entry of the string a bar *before* the melody itself (as given first to the piano) begins! Though not so labelled, the variation form is that which is here employed. Rhythmically, the theme is expanded in such an elaborate manner, and with such contrary accents and syncopations, that it is by no means easy to play until all three players are thoroughly familiar with the music, and thoroughly in accord with each other in temperament. Over all is spread such nobility of thought, that the superficially musical will make nothing of a movement so profoundly spiritual as this. In the last variation, or, as we may consider it, the coda to the whole, our interest is aroused in the highest degree by the unexpected modulations and fresh treatment of the melodic phrases. Mendelssohn—whose bright, sunny nature never, perhaps, once sounded so great a depth of profound feeling as this—has, nevertheless, left on record the enthusiastic appreciation of a great musician for certain points in this portion of the work, to which, on one occasion, after playing, he eagerly called attention.

Ending with a diminuendo on the key of D, we are aroused from our dream by the dominant chord of E flat, and we awaken with a start to find that the music has changed to a lively dance (the Allegro in two-four time, beginning without pause). The tonalities of E flat and B flat are here most skilfully treated, so that the theme, though beginning in E flat, settles down in a natural and convincing manner into the proper key of the trio. In the second subject here is a veritable pitfall for the readers à prima vista.

Digitized by Google

Ex. 9.



After the second working of this curious second subject, we are treated to a *Presto*, in A major, six-eight time, based upon the first few notes (although with different rhythm) of the Allegro. Modulating back to B flat, preserving the six-eight rhythm, the music in its naïve hilarity, fairly *romps*—there is no other word for it—to the end, the last few bars being marked *piu presto*. We may well imagine a country fair in full swing. What a contrast to the noble depth of the Andante! Yet the work possesses the most admirable symmetry and balance. I know of no work which presents to us more completely every side of Beethoven's many-sided nature. We instinctively think of Shakespeare and his marvellous capacity for entering into the most varied moods.

According to the analytical programmes of the Monday Popular Concerts, I learn that Beethoven sold his rights in it for the United Kingdom to Mr. R. Birchall, 133, New Bond Street. For this, the Sonata in G for pianoforte and violin, and pianoforte arrangements of the "Battle" Symphony, and the (far greater) Symphony in A, he received £65.

A few minor works for piano, violin and violoncello, remain yet to be noticed. The most interesting of these is the graceful little trio in B flat, in one movement:—Allegretto, six-eight time. It was written on June 2nd, 1812, "for his little friend, Maximiliana Brentano, to encourage her in her playing." The Brentanos of Frankfort had lent Beethoven at this period—which was one of financial difficulty—2,300 florins, and we may assume that this bright and unpretending little work was

Digitized by Google

written for his friends out of gratitude for the loan. It was published posthumously. The trio in E flat, which was also a posthumous publication, was a juvenile work. It consists of an Allegro moderato, Scherzo and Rondo. A set of fourteen variations in B flat, published as Op. 44, and another set in G, consisting of an introduction in G minor, and ten variations on a song, "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu," from "Die Schwestern von Prag," an opera, by W. Muller (Op. 121a) are of little importance. It would have been a greater kindness to the composer's memory to have suppressed this misnamed Op. 44, entirely, as it shows no trace of his genius. There exist arrangements in trio form, by the composer himself of the second and seventh symphonies, and also one in E flat, after the septet.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

The String Trios.

THE string trios (violin, viola and violoncello) are all early productions. The first, in E flat, Op. 3, was written in 1792 at Bonn, and was published by Artaria, in Vienna, in February, 1797. By some it is thought to have been originally intended for a string quartet. The autograph was formerly in the possession of the pianist, Thalberg. For the form in which it is cast, this first trio is remarkable for its length, the violin part occupying no less than fourteen pages. After piano trios and string quartets, string trios naturally sound thin, but are useful to fall back upon when fuller and richer combinations are not practicable. This early opus number is also noticeable for the introduction of two minuets, each distinct in style. The plan of the work is as follows:—Allegro con brio in E flat, common time; Andante in B flat, three-eight time; Menuetto in E flat, three-four time; Adagio in A flat, two-four time; Minuetto in E flat, three-four time; Allegro in E flat, two-four time —*six* distinct movements.

The serenade Trio, Op. 8, in D, was also issued by Artaria, in Vienna, in 1797. It is the most popular of all the string trios, being full of captivating melody. A serenade is merely a suite of movements for any combination of instruments, a march and a minuet being conspicuous features; the other movements may be as

Digitized by Google

many or as few as the composer pleases. Here we have the serenaders approaching and retiring to the strains of the same march, with other charming movements between. After the opening march comes an Adagio in D, three-four time; a minuet in the same key, a short Adagio in D minor, alternated with an equally brief Allegro molto (scherzo) in the tonic major key, a sprightly "Allegretto alla Polacca," in F, a set of variations on a theme in D, followed by the opening march. The theme, *Andante quasi Allegretto*, upon which the variations are founded, is one of exquisite tenderness, worthy, for all its simplicity and unpretentiousness, of the composer's ripest creative period.

The trio is very effective in its arrangement for violin and piano. Op. 42 in the catalogue of Beethoven's works is this same trio arranged for piano and viola, in which form it was issued in 1804 in Leipzic.

The three trios published under Op. 9, are dedicated to the Count de Browne, and were first issued by Traeg in Vienna, July, 1798. The first in G major contains an Adagio, an Allegro con brio, Adagio, Scherzo, and a Presto, the second, in D, an Allegretto, an Andante quasi Allegretto, Minuet and Rondo; the third, in C minor, an Allegro con spirito, an Adagio, a Scherzo, and a Presto. It is said that the Rondo of the pianoforte sonata in C minor, known as the "Sonata Pathetique," was sketched originally as the finale of the third trio, Op. 9.

The Serenade Trio in D major, Op. 25, is for flute, violin, and viola. Op. 41, in the complete Beethoven catalogue, is the same work, revised by the composer, and arranged as a duet for piano and flute, or violin. In its original conception it was published in the spring of 1802, by Cappi, of Vienna; the arrangement a year later by Hofmeister and Kühnel, Leipsic. The movements are: Entrata (Allegro) in D, common time; Tempo ordinario d'un Menuetto, in D, three-four time (with two trios); Allegro molto in D minor, three-eight time; an Andante in G, two-four time, with three variations; Allegro scherzando e vivace, in D, three-four time;

Digitized by Google

Adagio in D, two-four time; Allegro vivace e disinvolto, D major, two-four time; ending with a few bars, Presto. The movements, with the exception of the last, are unusually short, the entire work extending only to eight pages in the violin part. Though melodious, it is hardly equal in interest to the other Serenade.

There also exists a trio in C major for two violins and viola, published in 1806, by Artaria, Vienna. It is an adaptation of a trio for two oboes and cor anglais, published with Beethoven's sanction, and numbered Op. 87. It was republished by R. Cocks and Co., both for two violins and viola, and for two violins and 'cello; and more recently in a cheaper form in the Standard English Edition, as Op. 55, an opus number which belongs to the "Eroica" Symphony. The date of its composition is believed to have been 1794, and the copyright originally belonged to Breitkopf, as a trio for wind instruments.

A catalogue of works performed at the Monday Popular Concerts, issued by Messrs Chappell, and covering a period of thirty-seven years, from 1859 to 1896, shows in a very strong light the relative popularity of the above works. The number of performances may be taken also as fairly indicative of the relative merits of the works performed. We believe it was Beethoven who once said of the dictum, "Vox populi vox Dei," "I never did believe in it;" yet here, if anywhere, at any rate with regard to the accepted classics, we may look with some confidence for the ultimate survival of the fittest. The numbers are as follows:—Trio, Op. 3, three times; Op. 9, No. 1, twenty times; Op. 9, No. 2, once only; Op. 9, No. 3, sixteen times; Op. 25, once only; whilst the Serenade, Op. 8, heads the list with thirty-six performances.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

The Quartets.

THE six string quartets, Op. 18, date from an interesting period of Beethoven's career, having been composed in 1800, when he had reached the age of thirty. This is proved by a letter of his dated December 15th, 1800, which corroborates the evidence afforded by his sketch books. No. 1, in F, originally stood third in MS., and No. 3, in D, was placed first. They were published in 1801 by Molto, in Vienna, and are dedicated to Prince von Lobkowitz.

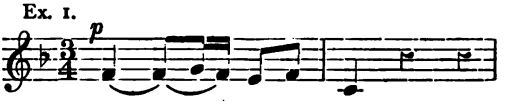
The string quartet is undoubtedly one of the most refined and delicate forms in which our art manifests itself, and may be likened to a fine engraving, whilst the full orchestra with its more vivid colouring and broader effects is analogous to the oil painting. Haydn is the true father of the quartet, and we may be quite sure from the internal evidence of the music itself, its naïveté and charm, and their prodigious number (83), that in playing them, we are brought into contact with the very spirit of the composer and his happiest moments of creative activity. Happy is the student who has both time and opportunity to gather around him three other sympathetic friends capable of proceeding steadily from Haydn to Beethoven through the medium of the string quartet! Here the four parts are of equal importance; to each player in turn come the principal themes, and the infinite *nuances* of which bowed instruments are capable, make it interesting in the highest degree to see what each player will make of the phrase. The individuality which in the orchestra is centred in a masterful conductor

Digitized by Google

remains, in the quartet, the privilege of each performer, within of course, reasonable limits, and when, for example, the second violin or viola becomes the speaker, the first violin must for the time accompany, or merely comment on the view taken of the theme by his companion. For, as the French violinist, Baillot, observed, a string quartet is a conversation between four friends. Very thoroughly did Beethoven grasp this principle, in his earliest examples in this form.

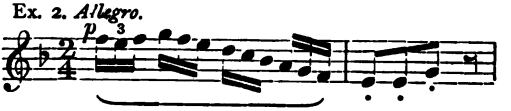
In the first quartet, the first movement, an Allegro con brio in F, three-four time, is evolved from a two bar phrase which is conciseness itself. The four instruments enter in unison :—

Ex. 1.

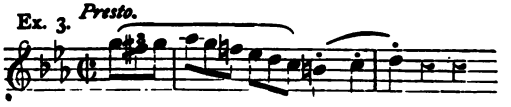


A thoughtful Adagio in D minor, nine-eight time, a light and tripping Scherzo in F, three-four time, requiring a clear and neat staccato, and an Allegro in F, two-four time, are the other movements. The last instantly calls to mind the commencement of the finale of the C minor string trio. As Beethoven repeats himself more rarely than any other composer, occasional resemblances between themes naturally attract attention all the more :—

Ex. 2. *Allegro.*



Ex. 3. *Presto.*



No. 2, in G, is in much the same general plan as regards the movements — Allegro, Adagio cantabile,

Digitized by Google

Scherzo, and Allegro molto, quasi Presto. In No. 3, in D,—also in the orthodox four movements of the Sonata form,—the third movement is simply styled "Allegro," though virtually a Minuet. In the second movement, an Andante con moto in B flat, the composer shows his full appreciation of the rich capabilities of the G string in the melodic phrases expressly marked "Sul G." In No. 4, in C minor, we have an especially charming and dainty Scherzo. The second violin leads off with this simple theme, "Andante scherzoso quasi Allegretto":—

Ex. 4.

The viola enters fugally with a real answer at the sixth bar, the first violin five bars later with the subject, the violoncello three bars later still with the first two bars of it. The imitation is not, of course, strictly maintained, but fugal entries reappear throughout the work with charming effect. H. C. Banister ("Lectures on Musical Analysis") in speaking of this movement and the similar treatment of the Andante of Beethoven's first Symphony, remarks:—"There is a pleasant *naïvete* in introducing this semi-scholastic element into that which is intended as a comparatively light movement: 'playing at Fugue writing,' it has been called by Professor Macfarren." As this Scherzo is practically a slow movement, Beethoven uses the minuet form for the next movement, and the finale is a spirited Allegro, which requires to be played with great abandon to bring out the Hungarian flavour of the principal subject. One suspects that Haydn's "Gipsy Rondo," well known alike to quartet players and pianists, suggested this theme. The quartet is one of the finest of the first set of six. The fifth, in A, is chiefly noticeable for its popular

Digitized by Google

Andante cantabile, with variations in D. How simply the first eight bar phrase moves up and down the scale! Twenty-seven consecutive notes, yet with only two leaps; a major sixth at the beginning of the phrase, and a minor third at the penultimate bar; the second violin moving in sixths with the first violin, the basses, tonic and dominant, except at the end where the harmony is from supertonic to close on the dominant. Studied simplicity in melodic construction could hardly go further. A theme which is to work out well in variation form should for the most obvious reasons, be carefully chosen and be concise in its structure. Especially charming is the fifth variation with its lovely coda. After the repeat, the modulation into B flat surprises the hearer, and he wonders whither the composer is leading him, when gently the falling tones of the theme are breathed out by the first violin; and from there to the end the music is inexpressibly eloquent and touching.

The sixth quartet is in B flat, and in conception it differs entirely from its predecessors. The movements are:—Allegro con brio in B flat, common time; Adagio ma non troppo, in E flat, two-four time; Scherzo in B flat, three-four time; Adagio in B flat, two-four time, and an Allegretto quasi Allegro in B flat, three-eight time. The Adagio is very florid in construction, with considerable sub-division of notes; the Scherzo has an exceptionally tricky and wayward rhythm, which will, at a first attempt, throw most amateurs into confusion. The Adagio is curiously entitled "La Malinconia," with the direction, "Questo pezzo si deve trattare colla più gran delicatezza." What Beethoven meant by it remains an enigma, but it is sufficiently lugubrious and mysterious to be cited as a proof that the former quality is not a modern Russian invention. The Allegretto starts off with a winding sixteen bar phrase entirely in semiquavers, and "La Malinconcia" reappears in a shortened form during this movement, to which at first it serves as an introduction. At the close of the movement, after some interrupted cadences, the principal theme is repeated *Prestissimo*.

Digitized by Google

When Beethoven's genius was again directed to quartet writing, six years had passed and no less than forty opus numbers had in the interim been given to the world. The group of three, in the keys of F, E minor and C, Op. 59, are inscribed to the Russian Ambassador to the Viennese Court, Count Rasoumoffsky. As a further compliment, some Russian airs have been used as the basis of some of the movements, thematic material very freely treated and adapted to the composer's requirements. The E minor and the C major are said to have been begun first; on May 26th, 1806, the Quartet in F was first committed to paper. The sketch books of this period show that Beethoven was already dreading deafness. The biographer, Thayer, thus transcribes a pencil note from one of these books :—" Struggling as you are in the vortex of society, it is yet possible, notwithstanding all social hindrances, to write operas. Let your deafness be no longer a secret—even in your art!" The allusion here is, of course, to " Fidelio," performances of which had at the same period been engaging his attention.

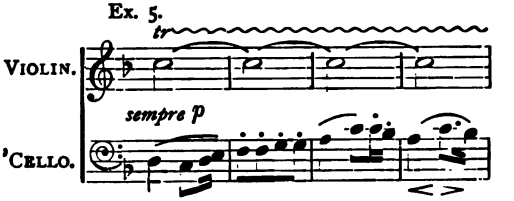
As we are now dealing with a riper creative period, we naturally expect a greater manifestation of Beethoven's genius than could be looked for in Op. 18, and the advance is such that it proved very disturbing to the players of that time. The 'cellist, Bernhard Romberg, essayed the first of these quartets, but so little to his satisfaction that he threw his part on the ground, stamped upon it, and declared it unplayable! This little incident occurred in Moscow at the house of Marshal Count Soltykoff. But Beethoven had very little regard for the technical abilities of his contemporaries; if the passages were possible, and the form of them essential to his thought, he was inexorable. His answer to Kraft, the 'cellist in the Schuppanzigh Quartet, when the latter complained that a certain passage did not lie within his hand was " Es muss liegen " (it must lie !) This quartet in F was played first from the MS. in Vienna in 1807, and the MS. subsequently found its way into the possession of the Mendelssohn family in Berlin, where we may be

Digitized by Google

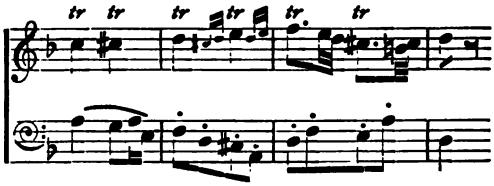
sure, it was duly treasured, for Felix Mendelssohn is known to have regarded this and the F minor quartet, No. 11, Op. 95, as the most thoroughly "Beethovenish" of all the composer's works. The publication of Op. 59 was intrusted to Schreyvogel and Co., of Pesth, by whom it was issued in January, 1808. The autograph of No. 3 bears no date, and is, or was, preserved at Charlottenburg.

It would be interesting to know what particular passage upset so experienced a player as Romberg; the fact that the 'cello leads off the quartet with the theme evidently did not suffice to appease him. Possibly the *Adagio molto e mesto*, with its extraordinary rhythmic variety and wealth of florid figuration proved too much for the attainment of the necessary unity between himself and his colleagues. With regard to the dainty second movement entitled, "Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando" it may be asked, is not here the "fairy scherzo" of which Mendelssohn is regarded as the inventor—anticipated? It requires an especially neat and clean light staccato on the part of all the players, and that Beethoven himself was pleased with the movement is shown by the great length to which it is developed, as though he felt loth to dismiss it or even to stray far from the principal idea, or to interrupt it as he sometimes does with a grim jest and an entire change of mood. The slow movement is much too elaborate for quotation. It ends with a rapid Cadenza, chiefly for the first violin, and the final Allegro, inscribed "Thème Russe," a curious subject, undecided in its tonality between F major and D minor is thus introduced:—

Ex. 5.



Digitized by Google



The second violin and viola being silent for the first seven bars are here omitted.

The second quartet of Op. 59 opens with an Allegro in E minor, six-eight time. Carl Reinecke's remark in his Letters to a "Lady on the Piano Sonatas of Beethoven," is here forcibly brought to one's recollection, "Have you ever noticed what beautiful *rests* Beethoven has composed!" No composer has been more fertile in effective expedients for arresting at the outset the listener's attention. Two abrupt full chords, *f* in the first bar; one bar *silent*; two bars *pp*, another bar *silent*, two bars *pp* (consisting of the previous phrase transposed a semitone higher), another silent bar; such is the means here employed, before the players set to work in real earnest with some imitative thematic material. The first double bar section of this first movement is very brief. It ends in the relative major key of G, but on its repetition modulates so as to plunge us headlong into the remote key of E flat major for our two opening chords, this time *ff*. A repetition, *p*, of this bar in single notes, a silent bar, an enharmonic change in the notation (first violin, E flat, B flat, changing to D sharp, A sharp), is Beethoven's method of getting back to the dominant key of B minor to begin the "development" section. But we are unexpectedly introduced to flat keys again. Such playing with unrelated keys is highly dangerous in the hands of less skilled composers,—dangerous to the general balance of the movement with respect to its tonality—but Beethoven takes us whereso-ever he will, and we follow with confidence, knowing that though even a Schubert might fail sometimes to

Digitized by Google

satisfy our critical faculties, with the great master of form all will eventually stand forth clear in the perfect symmetry of a well designed art work. The "Molto Adagio" which follows has the further inscription: "Si tratta questo pezzo con molto di sentimento." It is a melodious movement in E major, common time, and should be played with what the Germans would term "inwardness." The mere notes are nothing: it is what is made of them! The Allegretto is in E minor, three-four time, and opens with a singularly capricious theme, after which a major section in E is introduced, a Russian theme of six bars is started by the viola against an accompaniment of quaver triplets for the second violin. The same theme, alternately in tonic and dominant is taken up—the same six bars only—by the second violin, 'cello, and finally by the first violin. The finale is a Presto in E minor, alla breve time. It is worthy of remark that all four movements of this quartet have the same tonality—E minor and E major. The coda, "piu presto," preserves the minor key to the end, and affords abundant proof that a composer can be gay enough in it without feeling himself compelled to resort to the major to obtain a brilliant finish.

The Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3, is, according to the Annotator of the Monday Popular Concerts programme, the most popular of the three quartets on account of the Andante con moto and Finale. The first movement, an allegro vivace, common time, is preceded by twenty-nine bars of introduction. The first chord, an unprepared diminished seventh on F sharp, is here Beethoven's method of "seizing" his audience. We have become used to these things now, but when we remember these quartets are nearly a century old, the composer's daring unconventionality may be more justly measured. The bars, falling step by step in the unexpected harmonic progressions, awaken our interest. The leap upward of a seventh from C to the leading note B (bars 21—22), show clearly that the composer's thought exceeded the limits of the 'cello! The first violin leads off with a

Digitized by Google

spirited theme. Surely Haydn, who could not fully appreciate certain aspects of Beethoven's genius, would here have found a bright and joyous movement entirely after his own heart? Note how, after the development section, the first violin, in returning to the principal theme after four bars of a trill on the dominant, G, is unable to contain himself: instead of presenting the theme as at first, he breaks out into semiquavers and triplet quavers in the exuberance of his feelings. We should like to quote the Coda in its entirety as an example of a singularly fresh and happy ending.

The "Andante con moto quasi Allegretto" in A minor, six-eight time, is founded on smoothly-flowing thematic material. It is followed by a Minuet and Trio in C, which does not call for any special remark. The final movement, an Allegro molto in C, common time, is a spirited fugue, the viola leading off with a ten-bar subject, the second violin replying with a "real" answer, after which 'cello and first violin respectively enter, both with the subject. Players attempting this movement for the first time together will need good steadying powers lest the vivacity of the movement runs away with them. Played with firmness and precision, it never fails to make its due impression, being grateful to performers and listeners alike. In the later quartets we shall find much that can only with great difficulty be rendered clear and convincing to the auditors, but here we meet with none that may not be surmounted by a good sound technique, and, what is so important in quartet playing—the habit of playing together in order to obtain the right balance.

The tenth Quartet, Op. 74, in E flat, is known to German violinists as the "Harp" Quartet. This name may be more or less justified by the arpeggi passages for the first violin in the coda of the allegro, combined with the pizzicato passages for the other instruments. The original MS. came into the possession of the Mendelssohn family. It is inscribed, "Quartetto per due violini, viola, e violoncello. Da Luigi van Beethoven, 1809." On one side of the presto Beethoven has made

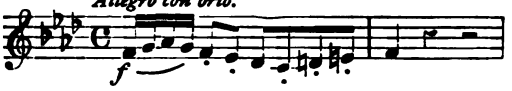
Digitized by Google

a memorandum—" Partitur von Egmont gleich an Göte." This quartet is one of considerable difficulty. The dedication is to his patron, Prinz Lobkowitz, and it was published in 1810 by Breitkopf and Härtel. In the brief Adagio which forms the introduction to the allegro, the players are instructed to begin *sotto voce*. The more highly-developed slow movement comes next, and is an Adagio ma non troppo in A flat, three-eight time, with a restful theme, which, however, when accompanied by the arpeggi in demisemiquavers gives work enough to the players thereof. A Presto in C minor, three-four time, succeeds,—really a Scherzo, though not so entitled,—the middle section of which is in the tonic major, " Più presto quasi prestissimo," and here we are instructed to regard the beats as in six-eight time. A similar instance occurs in the piano Sonatina, Op. 79, published at the same time but written a little earlier. But in this case it has been left for subsequent editors to point out that in the Presto alla Tedesca the first beat of each alternate bar should bear a little stronger accentuation. In the Quartet this " trio " section of the Presto comes twice with the first section between. The last movement is an Allegretto con Variazioni in E flat, two-four time. These variations are worthy of note from their conciseness. The first six variations do not expand the two sections of the theme (eight and twelve bars respectively, each section repeated). After the sixth variation, " Un poco piu vivace," these rigid outlines are, however, departed from, and in the coda a few bars of semiquavers *allegro* bring the quartet to a close.

The eleventh Quartet, Op. 95, in F minor, Beethoven has dedicated to "his friend, N. Zmeskall von Domanovetz." It was composed in October, 1810, and published by Steiner in Vienna in 1816. The autograph is in the Hofbibliothek, Vienna. From this early friend of his, Zmeskall, Beethoven frequently asked for pens: the dedication we may regard as a royal return for little services of that kind. The first movement is an allegro con brio in F minor, common time, opening with a bold unison phrase for all four instruments:—

Digitized by Google

Ex. 6. *Allegro con brio.*



The composer, as usual, makes the most of his thematic material, and the group of four semiquavers, with or without its context, is in great evidence throughout the movement. Equally thematic, and of interest to each instrument contrapuntally in turn, is the Allegretto ma non troppo, in D, two-four time, which follows. The key relationship is somewhat uncommon—from a signature of four flats to one of two sharps. The 'cello prepares the ear by a little passage of four bars, descending from the key note, before the first violin sings the principal theme *mezza voce*. The second theme, started by the viola, is answered fugally by the second violin; but a formal or strict fugue is not Beethoven's intention, for although the 'cello responds faithfully with the subject, and the first violin with the answer, we do not get further than the exposition. Descending notes in the bass suggest a return to the opening; but the viola sighs out plaintively its fugal theme, the second violin, then the 'cello, then the first violin responds with fragments of it, and we are gradually led back as by a master hand to the contemplation of our primary argument.

The Allegro assai vivace ma serioso starts with a sprightly looking theme in F minor, three-four time. The prevailing rhythm:—

suggests a mad frolic. But the warning "ma serioso!" Instinctively one plays the quavers with a firmer grip, slightly shortening the rests, lest the composer's *manes* be disturbed by our undue levity. After the double bar, a

Digitized by Google

strong contrast is found in smooth legato, again we meet with the key of D major. The movement concludes with the opening Allegro in a somewhat abbreviated form. But the trio is not yet ended. A Larghetto expressivo of eight bars, in two-four time, also in F minor, introduces an Allegretto agitato in six-eight time, in the same key, a complete movement in itself, but followed by way of coda with an Allegro in the tonic major, common time.

The Quartets in E flat, Op. 127, in B flat, Op. 130, and in A minor, Op. 132, are dedicated to Prince Nicolas von Galitzin. In Vienna, Beethoven frequently met Russian amateur musicians at Count Rasomowsky's, the Russian Ambassador. Galitzin proposed to Beethoven the composition of three quartets in an enthusiastic letter dated November 9th, 1822. The composer was to name his own price. The offer was accepted by Beethoven in a letter dated January 25th, 1823, fifty ducats (about £23), per quartet being the price suggested, to which the Prince replies that he has given an order for the amount to his bankers, with one hundred more ducats for the other two quartets. In May he writes to Beethoven, "You ought to have received the fifty ducats fixed for the first quartet. As soon as it is complete you can sell it to any publisher you choose—all I ask is the dedication and a MS. copy. Pray begin the second, and when you inform me you have done so, I will forward another fifty ducats." There are fourteen of these letters extant, in French, by Prince Galitzin, of whose professed willingness to wait for the moments of inspiration Beethoven fully availed himself. The E flat quartet was conceived at Baden, in the autumn of 1824, and was first heard in Vienna, more than two years after the acceptance of the commission—on March 6th, 1825. It was published, a year later still, in Mayence, by Schott and Sons. The autograph of the first movement was acquired by the Mendelssohn family, and that of the second movement by Artaria, Vienna. In the first movement, the Allegro, in three-four time, is prefaced by a few bars, maestoso; a section in G minor brings us

Digitized by Google

again to the maestoso, now in G major, followed by the Allegro in the same key again with a different development, the Allegro theme, transposed to C major, is preceded by four bars of the maestoso, and we are finally recalled to the key of E flat. The Adagio ma non troppo e molto cantabile in A flat, twelve-eight time, is a wonderfully originally movement. Richard Wagner* mentions this movement as an example "how deftly and delicately the links between the different variations can be contrived." "The real weakness," he says, "of the variation-form, however, becomes apparent when strongly contrasting parts are placed in juxtaposition without any link to connect them. Beethoven often contrives to convert this same weakness into a source of strength, and he manages to do so in a manner which excludes all sense of accident or of awkwardness, namely, at the point which I have described above† as marking the limits of the laws of beauty with regard to the sustained tone (in the Adagio), and the unfettered movement (in the Allegro), he contrives to satisfy, in a seemingly abrupt way, the extreme longing after an antithesis; which antithesis, by means of a different and contrasting movement, is now made to serve as a relief. Single and separate variations are frequently seen to have had each an independent origin, and to have merely been strung together in a conventional manner. The unpleasant effects of such fortuitous juxtaposition are particularly felt in cases where a quiet and sustained theme is followed by an exceptionally lively variation." In this great quartet the variations are not numbered, but each springs so naturally out of its predecessor that the effect is that of one continuous movement. The Scherzando vivace in E flat, three-four time, is interrupted by a Presto in the tonic minor, and the Finale, in common time, culminates in an Allegro con moto starting in C, but working back to E flat major.

The B flat major quartet was first performed in public —by Schuppanzigh and Linke's quartet party—on March

* "Ueber das Dirigeren," pages 44-45. † Page 34, et seg.

Digitized by Google

21st, 1826. It is numbered Op. 130, but originally stood third of the set dedicated to Prince Galitzin. It was published by Artaria on May 7th, 1827. The MS. of the first movement was also acquired by the Mendelssohns, Berlin, the second by F. Gross, the third by J. Hellmesberger, the Finale by Ascher; the Cavatina remaining with the publisher. The long and difficult fugue which at first formed the finale, was replaced by the spirited movement in two-four time which now stands in that relation, at the publisher's suggestion, and it is of especial interest as being Beethoven's last completed composition. He wrote it on November 26th, 1826, at his brother's house in Gneixendorf, a little village about fifty miles from Vienna. The "Danza Tedesca" was originally conceived in A, as a movement for the A minor quartet. At the first performance we are told "the Presto and Danza Tedesca were encored, but the Cavatina seems to have made no impression, and the fugue, which then served as a finale, was universally condemned." In the case of the fugue, his judgment agreed with that of the critics; it was published separately (Op. 133) and a new finale written; but he did not often give way to the judgments of his contemporaries. "Your new quartet did not please," was one of the bits of news brought to him on his death-bed by some officious friend. "It will please them some day," was the answer.*

The Quartet in C sharp minor, Op. 131, was composed in October, 1826, and published by Schott and Sons in April of the following year. The autograph of the first movement was acquired by the Mendelssohn family, the revised MS. of the whole work remaining with the publishers. It is dedicated to Baron von Sutterheim in return for the latter's kindness in giving the composer's nephew, Carl, a regimental appointment—the Baron being a Field Marshal Lieutenant who was engaged in the reorganisation of the Austrian army.

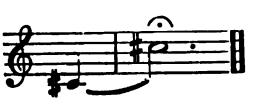
Richard Wagner, of whom we are told that at one period these string quartets were his constant companions,

* "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" (Grove).

Digitized by Google

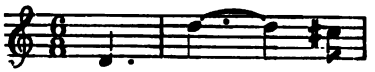
has written much over this particular quartet. In continuation of his plea for the avoidance of violent contrasts, quoted in our last chapter, he says :—

"A stronger case of similar import will be found in the beginning of the first Allegro, six-eight, after the long introductory Adagio of the string quartet in C sharp minor. This is marked *molto vivace*, and the character of the entire movement is thus appropriately indicated. In quite an exceptional way, however, Beethoven has, in this quartet, so arranged the several movements that they are heard in immediate succession, without the customary interval; indeed they appear to be developed one from the other, according to certain definite laws. Thus the Allegro immediately follows an Adagio full of a dreamy sadness not to be matched elsewhere in the master's works. If it were permitted to interpret the Allegro as showing a state of feeling such as could in some sort be reproduced in pictorial language, one might say that it shows a most lovely phenomenon, which arises as it were from the depths of memory, and which, as soon as it has been apprehended, is warmly taken up and cherished. Evidently the question with regard to execution here is :—How can this phenomenon (the new allegro theme), be made to arise naturally from the sad and sombre close of the Adagio, so that its abrupt appearance shall prove attractive rather than repellant? Very appropriately the new theme first appears like a delicate, hardly distinguishable dream, in unbroken *pp*, and is then lost in a melting *ritardando*, thereafter, by means of a *crescendo* it enters its true sphere, and proceeds to unfold its real nature. It is obviously the delicate duty of the executants to indicate the character of the new movement with an appropriate modification of tempo, *i.e.*, to take the notes which immediately succeed the Adagio :—



Digitized by Google

for a link, and so unobtrusively to connect them with the following :—



that a change in the movement is hardly perceptible, and moreover so to manage the *ritardando*, that the *crescendo* which comes after it will introduce the master's quick tempo in such wise that the *molto vivace* now appears as the rhythmical consequence of the increase of tone during the crescendo. But the modifications here indicated are usually overlooked, and the sense of artistic propriety is outraged by a sudden and vulgar *vivace*, as though the whole piece were meant for a jest, and the gaiety had at last begun! People seem to think this 'classical.'"

Further, in his essays on Beethoven, under the heading of a "Beethoven Day," Wagner has given us a most interesting emotional analysis of the inner meaning of this quartet, as it revealed itself to him :—

"If we rest content to recall the tone-poem to memory, an attempt at illustration such as the following may perhaps prove possible, at least up to a certain degree; whereas it would hardly be feasible during an actual performance. For, whilst listening to the work, we are bound to eschew any definite comparisons, being solely conscious of an immediate revelation from another world. Even then, however, the animation of the picture, in its several details, has to be left to the reader to fancy, and an outline sketch must therefore suffice. The longer introductory Adagio, than which probably nothing more melancholy has been expressed in tones, I would designate as the awakening on the morn of a day that throughout its tardy course shall fulfil not a single desire: not one. None the less it is a penitential prayer, a conference with God in the faith of the eternally good. The eye turned inwards here, too, sees the comforting phenomena it alone can perceive (Allegro, six-eight), in

Digitized by Google

which the longing becomes a sweet, tender, melancholy disport with itself; the inmost hidden dream picture awakens as the loveliest reminiscence. And now, in the short transitional *Allegro moderato* it is as though the master, conscious of his strength, puts himself in position to work his spells; with renewed power he now practises his magic (Andante, two-four), in banning a lovely figure, the witness of pure, heavenly innocence, so that he may incessantly enrapture himself by its ever new and unheard of transformations, induced by the refraction of the rays of light he casts upon it. We may now (Presto, two-two), fancy him, profoundly happy from within, casting an inexpressibly serene glance upon the outer world; and again it stands before him as in the Pastoral Symphony. Everything is luminous, reflecting his inner happiness. It is as though he were listening to the very tones emitted by the phenomena that move, ærial and again firm, in rhythmical dance before him. He contemplates life, and appears to reflect how he is to play a dance with life itself (short Adagio, three-four), a brief, but troubled meditation—as though he were diving into the soul's deep dream. He has again caught sight of the inner side of the world; he wakens and strikes the strings for a dance, such as the world has never heard (Allegro Finale). It is the world's own dance; wild delight, cries of anguish, love's ecstacy, highest rapture, misery, rage; voluptuous now and sorrowful; lightnings quiver, storms roll—and high above, the gigantic musician, banning and compelling all things, proudly and firmly wielding them from whirl to whirlpool, to the abyss. He laughs to himself; for the incantation was, after all, but play to him. Thus night beckons. His day is done." It is worthy of note that Beethoven has, in this instance only, numbered the seven movements contained in this quartet.

The third of the Prince Galitzin set comes next as to Opus number, Op. 132 in A minor. It was published by Schlesinger in Berlin, September, 1827, and the autograph is in the possession of the Mendelssohn family. It was first produced on November 6th, 1825. In the

Digitized by Google

spring of that year, Beethoven was recovering from a severe illness, and on the MS. sent to his patron appears the following translation into Italian of the superscription intended for the Adagio in C major "Canzona di ringraziamento in modo lidico offerta alla Divinita da un guerito ("Song of thanksgiving in the Lydian mode, offered to the Divinity by a convalescent.")

There is a well-known effect peculiar to bowed instruments, frequently met with in the violin music of Corelli, Handel, and Tartini, but so rarely employed by Beethoven, that its use in the final bars of the first movement attracts attention :—

Violinists will at once recognise it as a peculiar jingling effect produced by playing the same note alternately as an open note and as a stopped one on another string. The second movement, Allegro non tanto, introduces a "bag-pipe" effect, or drone bass, the middle section, where the first violin sustains the open string A whilst playing a melody on the first string.

The Molto Adagio following contains the inscription alluded to above. We also meet directly after in the Andante with the inscription "Neue Kraft fühlend" ("Experiencing renewed strength"), and later in the Molto Adagio with "Mit innigster Empfindung" (with inmost feeling) placed against a phrase which is repeated by each instrument in turn, a "variante" of the opening theme. The next movement, appropriately enough, is a brief and spirited "Alla Marcia, assai Vivace," and the last movement is a very fine Allegro Appassionata in A minor, culminating in a Presto with a major ending.

The last quartet, Op. 135, in F major, is dated from Gneixendorf, October 30th, 1826, and was published by Schlesinger, in Berlin, in September, 1827. Gneixendorf is a village about fifty miles from Vienna, where the

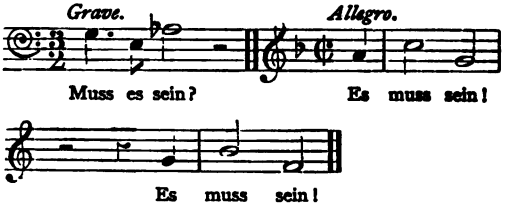
Digitized by Google

composer's brother Johann lived on his property. One Michael Kren, who was there engaged to wait on Beethoven, gives the following account of his daily life: "At half-past five he was up and at his table beating time with hands and feet, singing, humming and writing. At half-past seven was the family breakfast, and directly after it he hurried out of doors, and would saunter about the fields, calling out, waving his hands, going now very slowly, then very fast, and then suddenly standing still and writing in a kind of pocket book. At half-past twelve he came into the house to dinner, and after dinner he went to his own room till three or so; then again in the fields till about sunset, for later than that he might not go out. At half-past seven was supper, and then he went to his room, wrote till ten, and so to bed." The name "Gneixendorf," says Beethoven in a letter to Haslinger, "is something like the breaking of an axle-tree." And further he writes, "Best of all Tobiases . . . a quartet for Schlesinger is already finished, only I don't know which is the safest way to send it to you, that you may give it to Tendler and Manstein, and receive the money in return. Schlesinger will probably not make the remittance in gold, but if you can contrive that I should get it you would very much oblige me, as all my publishers pay me in gold. Besides, my worthy Tobiaserl, we stand in need of money, and it is by no means the same thing whether we have money or not." Sharp indeed was the recall from the ideal creations of his genius to the more sordid aspects of existence, for his brother had forbidden the invalid a fire in his room, and asked payment for lodging and food, although the latter was not to his taste. He therefore returned to Vienna, but being obliged to travel in cold and damp weather in an open chaise, a violent cold resulted, the forerunner of other illnesses which terminated fatally. The quartet is dedicated to "his friend, Johann Wolfmeier," and is considerably shorter than the preceding ones of his later period. Herein is another of those rare instances where the composer has given us a clue to the origin of his

Digitized by Google

thoughts. The final movement, Grave ma non trappo tratto in F minor, three-two time, alternated with an Allegro in F, common time, are founded on a question propounded by the 'cello and answered by the violins; the movement being headed thus:—

Ex. 7. *Der Schwergefasste Entschluss.*



Schindler thus explains this Beethovenish piece of humour:—

"Between Beethoven and the people in whose houses he at different times lodged, the most ludicrous scenes arose whenever the period arrived for demanding payment of the rent. The keeper of the house was obliged to go to him, almanac in hand, to prove that the week had expired and that the money must be paid. Even in his last illness he sang with comical seriousness to his landlady the interrogatory motive of the quartet above mentioned. The woman understood his meaning, and entering into his jocose humour, she would stamp her foot and emphatically answered, 'Es, muss sein.' There is another version of the story relative to this motive. It refers to a publisher of music, and does not differ very much from the anecdote I have just related. Both turn upon the article money, and are merely jokes. But what a poetic palace has Beethoven built upon the very prosaic foundation."

The fugue in B flat, of which we have already spoken, is inscribed "Ouvertura" on the MS., and the composer has also written of it, "Tantôt libre, tantôt recherché." He made for Artaria, the publisher, an

Digitized by Google

arrangement for piano duets, dedicating this also to Archduke Rudolph. There is another fugue in D for violin quartet in the possession of the "Gessellschaft fur Musik freunde," Vienna, published by Haslinger in 1827, written for a collection of Beethoven's works at the instigation of the publisher. I believe neither of these fugues have been publicly performed in England. Of the quartets, Op. 127 has been the least frequently performed at the Monday Popular Concerts, the Rasoumoffsky set, and the "Harp" Quartets, the most often; a record of thirty-seven years, from 1859 to 1896, showing forty-two performances of the last named against three only of Op. 127.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

The Piano Quartets and the String Quintets.

BEETHOVEN'S Piano Quartets do not call for extended notice, they are but little played, and are in part re-arrangements. There were three, in E flat, D and C respectively, published in 1832, by Artaria in Vienna, and another, Op. 16, in E flat, is identical with the quintet for pianoforte, oboe, clarionet, bassoon and horn, Op. 16, and the string quintet, Op. 75; for both arrangements the composer is responsible. It was composed about 1797, dedicated to Prince Schwarzenberg, and published in 1801 by Mollo in Vienna. This is the only piano quartet of Beethoven's which has appeared in programmes of the Monday Popular Concerts, where it has been given but once as a piano quartet, and once in its original setting. It is included in the Peter's Edition; the other three only in the Breitkopf and Härtel complete edition.

Notwithstanding the difficulty commonly experienced in obtaining two viola players, the great majority of string quintets are composed for two violins, two violas, and violoncello, and for this combination Beethoven's four quintets are written. Five part harmony is not so easy to write naturally, and for these reasons the quintet will always occupy a more limited space in the domain of chamber music than the quartet. Boccherini, however, wrote the astonishing number of 125, in all except twelve writing for two violoncellos.

Digitized by Google

The most important of the Beethoven quintets is that in C major, Op. 29, a work almost as often heard at the Monday Popular Concerts as anything of Beethoven's. It is exactly a century since it was written, the original publishers being Breitkopf and Härtel. It is dedicated to Count M. von Fries, and the autograph was acquired by Herr Paul Mendelssohn, Berlin. It is simply inscribed "Quintetto da L. v. Beethoven, 1801." The movements are, Allegro moderato in C, common time, an Adagio molto expressivo in F, three-four time, a Scherzo in C, three-four time, and a Presto in C, six-eight time, this last movement being twice interrupted in its headlong career by a brief "Andante con moto e scherzoso." The quintet is an eminently grateful task for the players, as its melodious themes and their development spring naturally from the legitimate technique to be reasonably expected from the various instruments.

The Quintet given as Op. 4 is an arrangement by the composer of his Octet for wind instruments, Op. 103. It was first published by Artaria, in Vienna, as a string quartet in February, 1797, and as an Octet in 1834. There is no dedication. It is in E flat, and contains an allegro con brio, common time, Andante in B flat, six-eight time, a Minuet in E flat, three-four time (with two trios), and a Presto.

The third Quintet, Op. 104, in C minor, is also an arrangement of the piano Trio, Op. 1, No. 3, and was published as a Quintet in 1819, twenty-four years later than the trio.

The Quintet, Op. 137, in D, is a brief Fugue in three-eight time, Allegretto. It was first published in 1827, in Vienna, by Haslinger, for his proposed collection of Beethoven's works, now preserved in the "Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde," Vienna. So far as the writer is aware, no public performance of this movement has been given in England.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

The Violin Concerto, Romances, Violoncello Sonatas and Variations.

WE have now reached three of the most important of Beethoven's violin solos. Had the composer written nothing else, these would certainly have stamped him as the greatest composer for the violin—not, indeed, in its technical aspect, but as an exalted, spiritual medium for impressing the souls of all who place noble ideas above technical display.

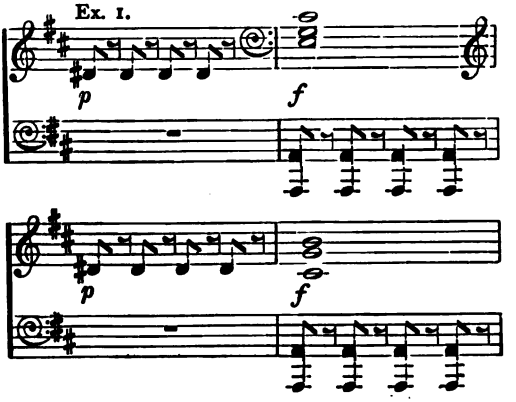
The Concerto for violin and orchestra, Op. 61, was composed in 1806, and first played on December 23rd of that year by Franz Clement, a Viennese violinist, a fine player of many attainments, amongst others being the gift of a memory so prodigious that it enabled him to construct a piano arrangement of the "Creation," assisted only by the libretto; an arrangement so satisfactory that it was accepted by Haydn for publication. Clement was at that time the principal violin at the Theatre, Vienna; he subsequently succeeded Weber as conductor at Prague. But although Beethoven esteemed Clement so highly as to write this great Concerto especially for him, the dedication was reserved for the composer's friend, Stephan von Breuning. In 1804, Beethoven and Breuning both occupied rooms at the "Rothe Haus," Vienna, Breuning having an appointment at the War Office. His wife was a pianist of ability with whom Beethoven frequently played duets, and to her he dedicated the piano arrangement of the Concerto. The autograph is in the Imperial Library, Vienna, and the

Digitized by Google

publication was under the auspices of the Bureau des Arts et d'Industrie, Vienna and Pesth. The MS. received many alterations in the solo part at the hands of the composer after the first performance, and it is believed that it was written in haste, Beethoven allowing himself to be driven for time. Upon the original MS. the composer wrote, "Concerto par Clemenza pour Clement, primo violino e Direttore al Theatro à Vienna dal L. v. Bthon., 1806." Clement's biographer, in the "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," observes, "It is difficult to believe, if we had not the programme still to refer to, that at the concert at which he played Beethoven's Concerto for the first time, he also performed a set of variations 'mit umgekehrter Violine'—with the violin upside down." What Beethoven thought of this piece of charlatanism is not stated.

The opening Allegro non troppo in D, C time, has eighty-eight bars assigned to the orchestra before the solo instrument enters with its broken octaves leading up to smoothly-gliding sequences. Familiar enough to us now, but very characteristic of Beethoven, and how novel to the first audience (nearly a century ago) must this responsive section to the first eight-bar phrase have sounded:—

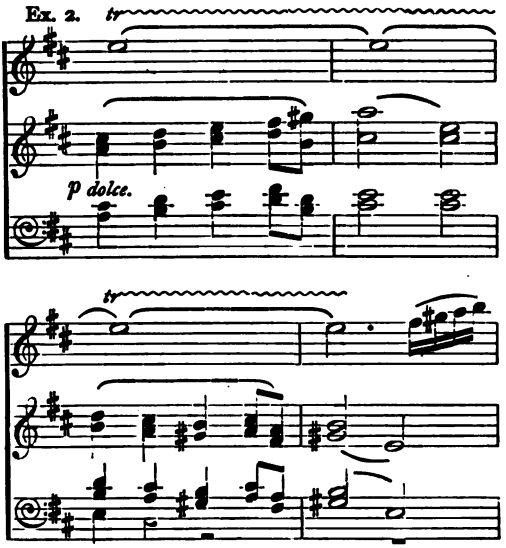
Ex. 1.



Digitized by Google

The second subject is announced (against a prolonged shake on E for the solo instrument), by the orchestra in the orthodox key of the dominant:—

Ex. 2.



The slow movement, a Larghetto in G, common time, is not developed at great length, and it leads without break into the Rondo in six-eight time in which the theme, announced at once by the solo instrument, is very delicately accompanied by the orchestra.

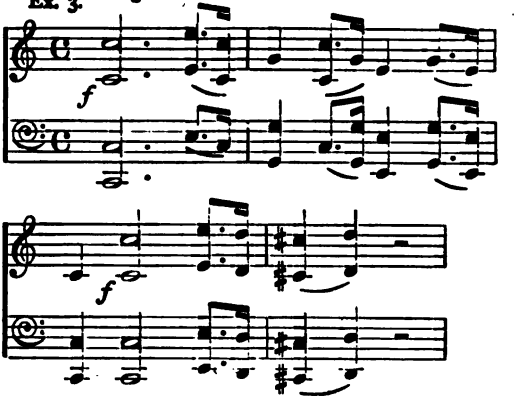
Many Cadenzas have been written and played for this final movement, that by Joachim being perhaps the best known. Probably this great violinist has played it more frequently than anyone in public, certainly at a period when it was but little known.

Another Violin Concerto in C was projected by Beethoven, it is conjectured of an earlier date than the above. The fragment which exists belongs to the first

Digitized by Google

movement, an Allegro con brio, common time. It begins:—

Ex. 3. *Allegro con brio.*



The autograph is in the library of the Gesellschaft der Musik freunde, Vienna. From this MS. Josef Hellmesberger completed the movement. There is certainly enough of Beethoven's style in it to make it worthy of an occasional performance. The publishers are Cranz and Co. There is also a "Triple Concerto" in C, Op. 56, for piano, violin, violoncello and orchestra, composed in 1804, and dedicated to Prince von Lobkowitz. It is a little known work, and, from its nature, seldom performed.

The Romance in G, Op. 40, is conjecturally assigned in Thayer's catalogue to the year 1802. Original publishers, Hoffmeister and Kühnel, Leipsic, 1803, no dedication. The new edition of Beethoven's complete works assigns it to the year of publication, "assuming," says the annotator to the Monday Popular Concerts, "that a passage in a letter written by Beethoven's brother to Johann André in the previous year refers to something else." "We have also two Adagios for violin, with accompaniment for several instruments, which will cost 135

Digitized by Google

florins." The accompaniment is scored for two violins, viola, violoncello, flute, two oboes, two bassoons and two horns. The autograph is simply inscribed "Romance." The violin has here a hymn-like theme in effective double stopping, with responsive sections for the orchestra or piano.

The Romance in F, Op. 50, appeared in 1805, being originally issued by the Bureau des Arts et d'Industrie, together with the two easy piano sonatas, Op. 49. Both Romances are amongst the most widely known violin solos, so there is little need to describe them in detail. Each is distinguished by the calm beauty of its principal subject, the Romance in F being perhaps the greatest favourite. Many Romances have been written for the violin since these were penned, yet they more than hold their own with a perennial freshness.

Much less generally known than any of the other sonatas, the five which Beethoven wrote for violoncello and piano, and the three sets of variations do not, as a whole, occupy so high a position in the estimation of musicians as many of the great compositions we have been considering. Indeed, relatively speaking, the two violoncello sonatas and the fine variations in D of Mendelssohn, are in many ways more effective and interesting to violoncellists. But our task would be incomplete without some notes concerning them; and if we appear to have spoken somewhat slightingly beforehand of these works, it must be remembered that Beethoven has himself elsewhere set up so high a standard that it is difficult for the great man himself to be always dwelling on such Olympian heights.

Sonatas Nos. 1 and 2, Op. 5, were dedicated by Beethoven to the King of Prussia, Frederick William II., and issued by Artaria in Vienna, February, 1797. The previous year Beethoven journeyed from Prague to Berlin, and these two sonatas were played at court, the composer himself taking the piano part. The King presented him with a box of louis d'or, and Beethoven is reported to have shown it with great appreciation to his

Digitized by Google

friends as "no common box, but one of the sort usually given to ambassadors."

The finest, however, of the violoncello works is the Sonata in A, Op. 69. This saw the light in 1809, through the house of Breitkopf and Härtel. The inscription runs "To my friend, Baron von Gleichenstein." The Sonata comprises an Allegro in A, a Scherzo in A minor (somewhat longer than Beethoven's usual creations in this form), a very brief "Adagio Cantabile" in E of only eighteen bars, leading direct into a very lively "Allegro vivace" in first movement form, and in which the first phrase of five notes is made a great deal of as the piece runs its joyous course.

The two sonatas in C and D, Op. 102, were written in 1815, and are dated "July" and "August." The autograph, in the possession of O. Jahn, of Bonn, is inscribed "Freie Sonate." Artaria published them in Vienna, Jan., 1819; the second is dedicated to Countess von Erdödy; the first has no dedication. But Beethoven gave a copy of each of these two sonatas to the English pianist, Charles Neate, and on the first the composer wrote, "Sonate pour le piano et le violoncelle composée et dediee à son ami Mr. Charles Neate, par Louis von Beethoven."

The "Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto" of the Sonata in D is a fine and characteristic movement, but the concluding movement, "Allegro fugato"—a three-part fugue founded on an ascending scale passage of one octave, led off by the violoncello — is not particularly interesting.

The variations do not call for special comment. They are as follows:—Twelve Variations in G, on the theme, "See the conquering hero comes" (Judas Maccabæus), dedicated to Princess Lichnowsky, published by Artaria in 1797; seven Variations in E flat on "Bei Männern" ("Men who feel the power of love"), composed Jan. 1st, 1802, published in April of the same year by Mollo, Vienna, and dedicated to Count von Browne; and twelve Variations in F on "Ein Mädchen" ("A girl, or a beloved wife," from Mozart's "Zauberflote"), published by J. Traeg, Vienna, in 1798.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

The Sketch Books.

AS a pendant to our historical and analytical notes on Beethoven's violin works, it will be of interest to get, as it were, inside the composer's mind, and see for ourselves how some of his ideas first presented themselves, and how they were subsequently modified by the understanding and ripe experience into themes of perfect beauty. This we can actually do, in the case of many important works, through the publication, in facsimile, of some of the sketch books in which Beethoven was in the habit of writing down any new ideas that seemed to him worthy of working out—usually a few bars only of the melody—with his after-thoughts and improvements upon the same. It will probably ever remain a mystery *why* certain sequences of notes impress musical people of widely differing nationalities, thoughts, habits, education, through succeeding generations as a heaven-sent inspiration, whilst other melodic successions, though equally correct, and also, it may be, as irreproachable in their subsequent working out from, let us say, an examiner's standpoint, should be regarded by all cultured musicians as "manufactured" and totally lacking "inspiration." We know that each degree of the scale conveys a different mental inspiration; that a falling sequence of notes (so largely used by Beethoven in his adagios and andantes) have a soothing, reposeful effect, the intervals of the fourth and fifth give an impression of boldness and energy, the third a soft, almost effeminate, sensation,

Digitized by Google

whilst the seventh is piercing and aspiring. But the deft blending of all these into a theme of beauty which shall delight mankind for many generations still eludes the most patient investigation. It would seem that just in the same proportion that an idea powerfully fascinates a composer with its suggestiveness and latent possibilities, so will it impress, not, indeed, all the world, but that portion to whom good music is a delight, whilst the most gifted writer, sitting down to write in a mood which presents his contemplated work to him in the light of a task rather than as an absorbing passion, though his ripened experience may enable him to write with facility and correctness, yet, in some mysterious way, to outsiders the composition will appear lacking in attractiveness and the fascinating personality they have hitherto associated with the composer.

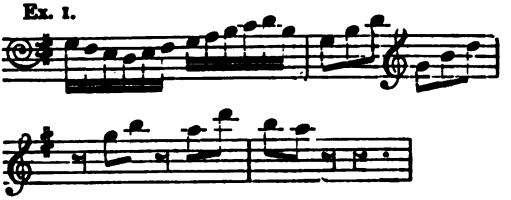
Beethoven's sketch books remain to us as a lesson that the greatest genius, if he would have his works endure, cannot dispense with the most arduous study. Did we judge by them alone, we might declare that genius and the capacity for hard work are synonymous terms. For when inventing a theme he frequently did not hesitate to write it over again many times in varying forms, until the last version is, in some cases, hardly recognisable as having sprung from the first conception. The combinations and new lights thrown upon a theme during its subsequent progress, are rarely a happy accident or sudden inspiration (as many an amateur imagines), but are possibilities already foreseen when the theme is first decided upon, and presented in its simplest form. Thus a really great work grows in interest, and the intelligent listener's attention suffers no relaxation.

Martin Gustav Nottebohm, born 1817 in Westphalia, died 1882 at Graz, studied under both Mendelssohn and Schumann, and became a specialist on the subject of Beethoven's compositions. In 1865 he edited "A Sketch Book of Beethoven's"; in 1873, a volume of "Beethoven's Studies" (the lessons with Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and Salieri), and in 1880 "A Beethoven Sketch Book of the

Digitized by Google

Year 1803," also various other works which do not here concern us. From one of the sketch books we give Beethoven's notes for the Violin and Piano Sonata in G, Op. 30, No. 3. The original idea for the first movement stands thus :—

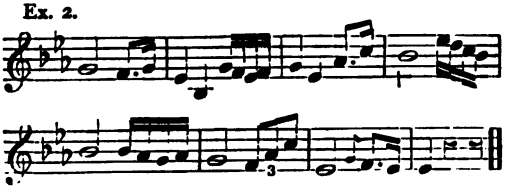
Ex. 1.



It is unnecessary to give here the theme as it finally appeared; students will find it profitable and interesting to compare with the printed copy which each should possess. The composer, it will be noticed, prefers to repeat his first semiquaver group in place of the second half of bar 1, fig. 1, and the reason appears to be this,—the arpeggio rising on bar 2, G B D is already, so to speak, discounted, and loses something of its freshness through being *anticipated* in the latter half of the first bar.

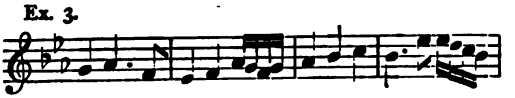
But the Tempo di Minuetto undergoes a much more remarkable metamorphosis. Here is Beethoven's original thought :—

Ex. 2.



The second idea was deemed equally unsuccessful :—

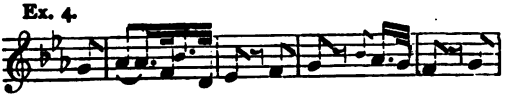
Ex. 3.



Digitized by Google

The third idea much more nearly resembles the final one which we all know; yet there are some striking points wherein they differ, notably in the final cadence:—

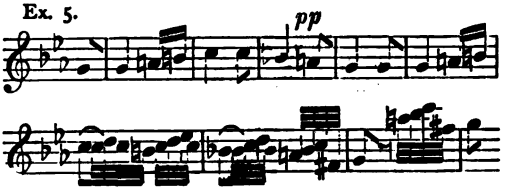
Ex. 4.



The next idea shows itself to be an amalgam of the first and third—discarding the intermediate one entirely—and is formed by joining the first half of the third version to the second half of the first, with some very slight modifications.

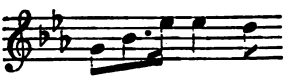
The responsive section in C minor was originally intended to be much more florid in its subsequent figuration. Curiously, it is noted down as in $\frac{3}{8}$ time instead of $\frac{3}{4}$. Note also the expressive substitution of the augmented second A flat to B natural in the final version, as compared with this:—

Ex. 5.



Still under the influence of $\frac{3}{8}$ time, we find the beginning of another eloquent melody thus noted down:—

Ex. 6.



The sketches for the last movement do not present such marked variations. It may appear to some violinist

Digitized by Google

readers that these matters concern only the student of form and composition. But no one can participate in a duo sonata satisfactorily, unless he possesses something more than the mere technical ability. There is needed in addition:—

1st. A thorough sympathy with, and understanding of, his fellow instrumentalist's part.

2nd. A knowledge of form sufficient to enable him to judge of the composition as an artistic whole, and to preserve a due balance and relationship between the principal themes and subordinate ones.

3rd. To distinguish between melody and accompaniment, that the latter may be immediately recognised, and not treated as if it were a solo. And, the violin being essentially a melodic instrument, and also a very exacting one, it is all the more necessary to point out to students that technique must, if it is to impress his hearers, stand out from such a background as is here indicated, of general musicianly culture.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

Beethoven's String Quartet.

IN the Beethoven house in Bonn are preserved two violins, a viola and a violoncello, which formerly belonged to Beethoven. In the "Guide" kindly sent me by the caretaker, Herr Loyal, they are thus catalogued:—

(*a*). Violin by Nicolaus Amati, 1690.
(*b*). Violin by Jos. Guarnerius, Fil. Andreæ, Cremona, 1718.
(*c*). Viola by Vincenzo Ruger, detto il Per, Cremona, 1690.
(*d*). Violoncello by Andreas Guarnerius, Cremona, 1675.

"Two of these instruments are stamped with Beethoven's seal; on the back of each a great B is scratched upon the varnish. With them are four bows, four cases, and two coverlets (blankets) for *a* and *b*.

"These valuable instruments—a present from Prince Karl Lichnowsky to Beethoven (in the years 1800-1802) —last sounded at the inauguration of the Beethoven house in the year 1893, when Herr Joachim, with his quartet party, Kruse, Wirtz and Haussmann, played on them the Adagio of the A minor Quartet (Op. 132)."

The Beethoven house and its valuable collection of relics is due to the initiative of twelve citizens of Bonn, in 1889. A society was formed in connection with it; Herr Joachim being elected honorary president upon the occasion of his artist's jubilee in March, 1889. Herr

Digitized by Google

Joachim has kindly written me the following note concerning the instruments in question :—

"They are not very remarkable as far as their value as specimens of violin making are concerned, but of course invaluable as relics of a great man. Only one of the violins seems to me of Italian origin. They are of good sound, if not first rate."

The Beethoven house also contains the so-called Linzer Quartet table. It is a dining table of the end of the eighteenth century, in rosewood, with bronze ornamentation. In the table top four desks are inserted and retained by a spring, so that the table might be utilised for quartet playing. It came from the house of Councillor and Chief Customs officer, Gottfried Wolters, of Linz on the Rhine. According to a tradition in the family, Beethoven, with other members of the Electoral Court orchestra, frequently went to the house as a guest, and made music at this table.

[THE END.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Mus 1512.432
The violin music of Beethoven,
Loeb Music Library
BCY8348
3 2044 041 102 310

Digitized by Google